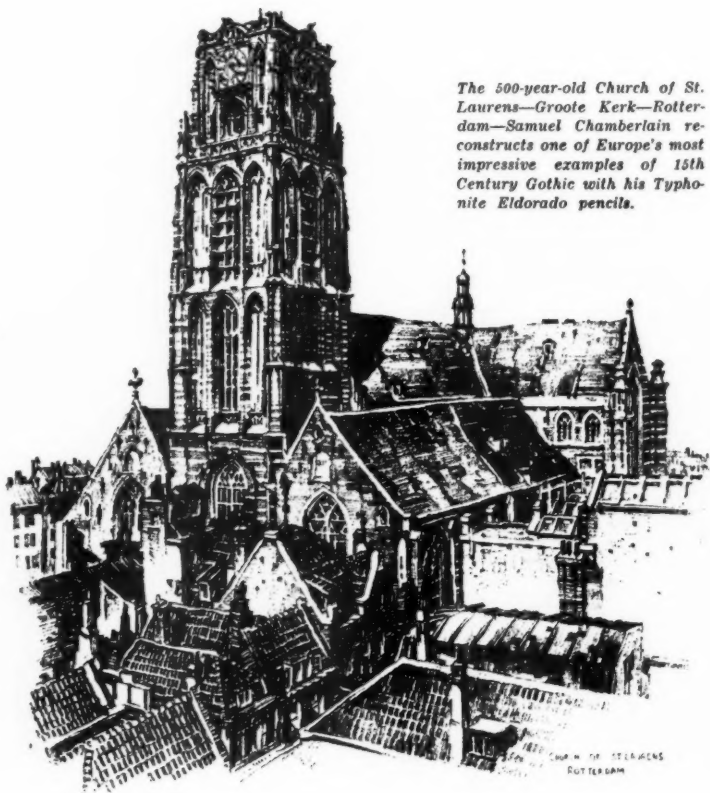


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CANADIAN ART

Christmas-New Year Number

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LAWREN HARRIS
*Mount Thule,
 Bylot Island*

LAWREN HARRIS
Dr. Salem Bland
*The Art Gallery
 of Toronto*



Lawren Harris—A Retrospective Exhibition of His Painting 1910-1948

ANDREW BELL

GOETHE said, "Free yourself from dead rubbish, let us love the living". Prophets are often denied honour in their own country, and certainly painters are much more successful dead than alive. Emily Carr is a sad case of this sort of thing.

The retrospective exhibition of Lawren Harris paintings, covering the period 1910-1948, which opened at Toronto in mid-October, and will cross Canada under the auspices of the National Gallery, is the first time a Canadian artist has been given, while he still lived, any substantial measure of his public due. The Art Gallery of Toronto is to be thanked for a heartening precedent.

This is a big show of more than two hundred paintings, sketches and drawings. The range is complete from the early, very literal, carefully organized landscapes and pictures of houses, to the recent equally carefully organized abstractions. Not all the pictures are Harris at the top of his successive forms. Yet taken together the impact of the show, for this reviewer at least, was very powerful indeed.

To talk about specific works is probably a good way to describe the artistic evolution and growth of Harris. One of the earliest canvases, dated 1910, (the artist was then twenty-five) is *Houses, Wellington Street, Winter*. It is good: solidly drawn and catching the jewel-like colour of a Canadian street in winter twilight. There is no particular originality to the work. What is interesting, however, is the sure evidence that from the beginning Harris knew line and colour. A little later there is the 1912 sketch, *Building the Ice House, Hamilton*, done when the young painter tended to look at things through impressionist eyes. Even at that stage there was an emphatic stress on the importance of design for its own sake. This emphasis runs like a *leit-motif* through almost all the later Harris work.

For a time the most successful of his pictures were the descriptions redolent of unaffected city houses and streets. These have considerable charm and the characteristic directness. But they lack, like most of the earlier Algoma work, any degree of original power. This seems to have come quite suddenly, and is first apparent in the work he did in Halifax in 1921. The picture *Black Court*, a wrathful attack on bad housing in a grey, bleak Halifax, is a good example. Here is an expression of that particular intensity, which burns through all of the really successful pictures. Harris is a sincere man, and it seems that, to be moving in paint, it was first vital he personally be moved.

The family background helps to explain his artistic direction. On both the mother's and father's side there was a pioneer tradition. The father had been in Manitoba and the North West in those early days when the Canadian Pacific Railway was being pushed across Canada. His grandfathers were pioneer Baptist ministers, and it was as a pioneer, though of a different kind, that Harris found himself.

The quest of this artist during all of his important years, and in most of his significant work, has been for a telling statement in paint of the awesome mystery of Canadian space. What did those portions of Canada, which were vast and wild and monumental look like, and what was their inner essence? Harris would discover everything he could about them.

Probably the first big discovery is what he did in *Above Lake Superior* (circa 1924), although this canvas is not one of my favourites. You, no doubt, are familiar with the painting, for it is now one of the best known of Canadian pictures. What one thinks of most in Harris, prior to the abstractions, is there—the bold simplification, the symbolic forms, the quality of drama.

The "why" of this approach is interesting. Harris would say, I feel, that he simplified and symbolized because it was his conviction that only that way could he explain with adequate force just how that kind of Canada was. There have been strictures from some about the dramatic element. What would Harris' defence be? I don't know for certain, but this would be my thought: autumn trees in Canada don't simply wilt and die—they end their span in columns of pure flame; lakes in this country don't softly shimmer—they are burnished silver; the rise of the land in the far west is more than a gentle roll of the surface of the earth—it is a great towering to the sky.

Let me illustrate this interpretation through comments on a few of the best of the Rocky Mountain, Lake Superior and Arctic canvases. *Pic Island*, and *Isolation Peak* are two examples. In both Harris has seemingly sheared away from his subject every possible detail that might interfere with an adequate understanding of its inner essence. Look at the second of these. Here you have a soaring pyramid—like a white and brown form cutting right through the deep blue sky—with a foreground of infinitely ordered and emerald-luminous ice flows.

Then, there is *Mount Thule*, *Bylot Island*. This also is a stylization of mountain shapes, mirrored in water. Those snow-capped peaks, that extraordinary quality of infinite space, that menacing green darkness in the lower lying country: all these devices point up aspects of the Harris approach to Canadian nature. Canada is vividly coloured: it is a powerful young giant: to grasp its essential nature and potential power is not easy. If you were to discover it,—line and colour *had* to be bold and simple, and form *had* to be expressed in symbolic terms.

Rather in the same vein, though of quite a different subject, is *Lighthouse*, *Father Point*. Seeing it made me think of Michaelangelo's remark, "The more the marble wastes, the more the statue grows." All non-essentials have been hewn away. Nothing remains but the stark sentinel of the lighthouse set against a suggestive, almost celestial-blue, background. For me, at least, it is one of the most telling of the canvases.

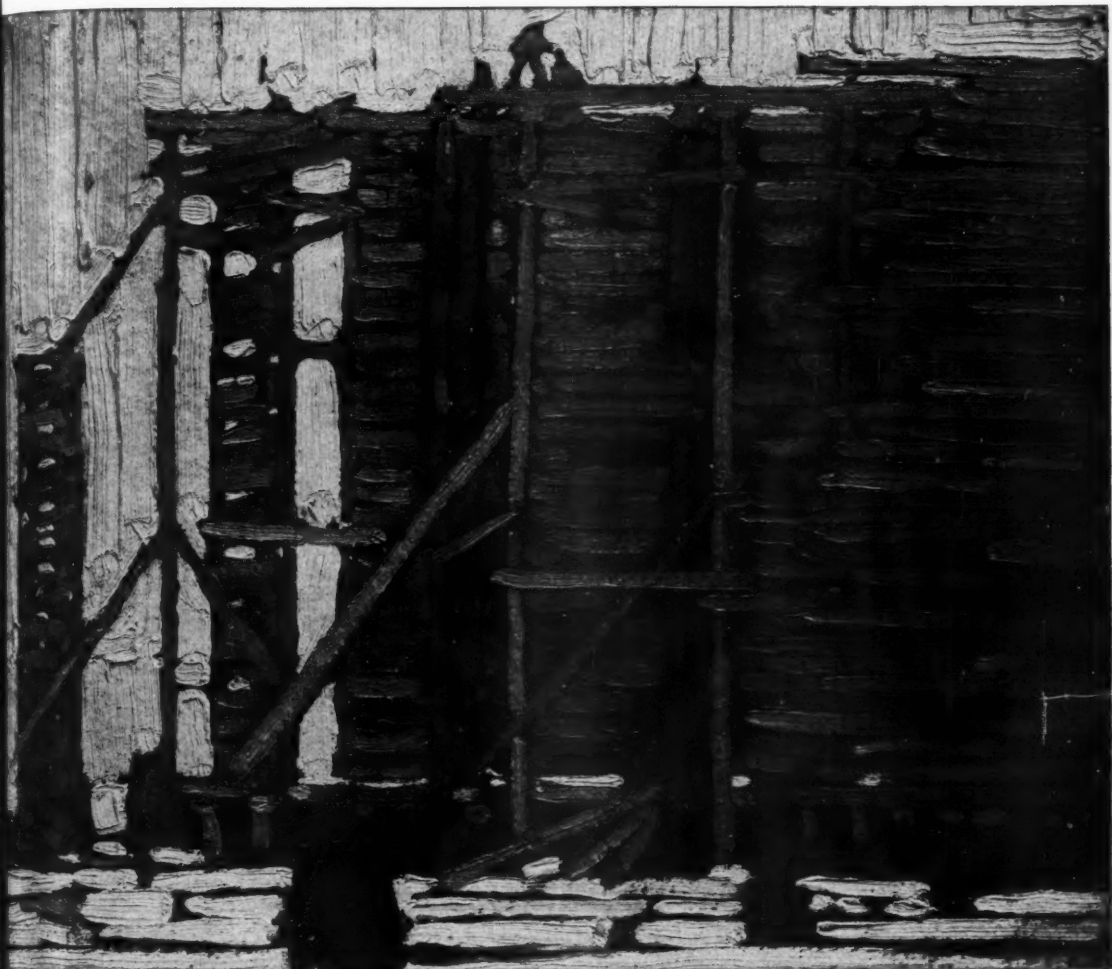
The exhibition includes, too, the impressive portrait of Dr. Salem Bland. This is not simply "a very good likeness". It is a penetrating visual essay on the character of a devout and influential preacher who interpreted the gospel in social terms. The granite-hard integrity to the expression, those far-away, yet knowing eyes, the disciplined composure of the waxen-coloured hands indicate that Harris knew what he wanted to say, as well as how to say it.

All of the recent canvases, that is to say, from 1937 to the present, are abstractions. That this should happen is as logical, and almost seemingly pre-destined as each of the earlier stages in the career of Harris. It is as though contemplation of the problem of time has been added to contemplation of the problem of Canadian space. These are infinitely complicated considerations: perhaps they thus could be best explained through the use of non-representational formulae. That way the imaginative opportunity seemed so much better.

Harris doesn't title his abstract paintings, and he gives as his reason "that it is impossible to get their meaning into words". They are, of course, *subjective* studies—to quote the artist "... statements of ideas and intimations of a philosophic kind in plastic, aesthetic and emotive terms." And the response of those who have seen them, which also is subjective, has been infinitely various.

To begin with there are the obvious points of contact with the previous paintings. There is the same consummate technique, the same impressive vitality, and even more than before, the same tense strength. A purely apathetic onlooker would seem to me a very peculiar person.

Then there is a consciousness that this is work that is cerebral. You may feel an immediacy of effect, but at least for this reviewer it took time to decide why. Certainly the paintings are not of a pattern. One, for example, suggested music—a Brahms-like symphony in paint. Another struck me as almost aggressively cruel, but then that is a fair comment on elements of our present world. Two of them, done in cool yellows, grays and blues, resembled philosophic dialogues: detached, contemplative and serene.



LAWREN HARRIS. *Building the Ice House, Hamilton, 1912. Sketch*

Thinking back over his achievement is rewarding. This is an artist of the still new North American world. He is a painter who, practically from the beginning, has seen through unclouded, new-world eyes. He has paid tribute to our physical strength and beauty, and he has said that Canada is simply an exciting frontier leading to much bigger horizons. I don't always follow him in colour—though very often it is magnificent. But

that is about my only serious criticism. Harris has been a big giver of truths—and this surely is the real stamp of an enduring artist.

While he still lives is certainly the right time for a retrospective showing. It is not, however, the correct moment for a definitive appraisal. Happily also, Lawren Harris has, besides an impressive past, a future. It is inconceivable that he could lose his capacity for growth.

The Pursuit of Form

NORTHROP FRYE

MOST painters choose a certain genre of painting, which in Canada is generally landscape, and commit themselves to the genius of that genre. Their growth as painters is thus a growth in sensitive receptivity. In comparing early and late work of a typical landscape painter, such as Arthur Lismer, one can see a steady increase in the power of articulating what he sees. The early work generalizes colour and abstracts form; the late work brings out every possible detail of colour contrast and formal relationship with an almost primitive intensity. Emily Carr seems to go in the opposite direction, from the conventional to the conventionalized, from faithful detail to an equally intense abstraction. Yet there too the same growth in receptivity has taken place, the same power to express all the pictorial reality that she sees.

It is the peculiar quality of Lawren Harris's painting that it is partly an act of will. He does not surrender to nature and let it grow organically through his mind into art; he has a strongly intellectual mind which imposes pictorial form on nature. He explores and abandons one genre after another in a drive to articulate, not the pictorial genius of a subject, but the pictorial forms of his own mind which are projected on the subject. He is the type of painter who grows through states of metamorphosis, breaking his life into periods of experiment: the type represented by Turner and Picasso. This is the revolutionary type, and Harris is Canada's only important revolutionary painter.

In most exhibitions, as we follow the progression from early to late, we are brought back constantly to the same thing, which gets clearer all the time. But in a Harris exhibition we are following a trail. We pursue him northward from the early Ontario landscapes to the icebergs and bleak mountains of his middle period, and still further north to his abstractions, where he seems to be sitting on the North Pole in an inaccessible world of spinning globes and flashing aurora borealis. Nothing he paints ever seems to look at us.

In the early landscapes, stiff with repainting and hard with Ontario sunlight, the main subject is usually a building or row of buildings, in which the ironic eye of a potentially abstract painter has caught, not the pictorial essence of the building, but, on the contrary, the sense of its pictorial incongruity. The buildings have proportions, but they are not very good proportions, so he leaves them imprisoned in their own angularity, so to speak, and goes to look for freer forms among the icebergs. In the two dreadful pictures of Maritime slums, which look a little like some of the nightmarish early Chiricos, this sense of human physical order as a parody of human mental order is at its sharpest. People sometimes appear in front of these buildings, but they are dream-figures, and in the amazing portraits of John Robins and Salem Bland, in which two very human and warm-blooded people are stylized into contemplative yogis, we again feel that the subject has been transmuted rather than evoked.

Harris is best known, of course, by his conventionalized Northern landscapes. They are not always liked for the right reasons: what with their blancmange colouring and their geometrical simplification, they seem to be painted to a rather facile formula. But it is clear that Harris is the last man to relapse into a formula, and, going to these pictures from the earlier ones, one can only wonder at what he was willing to sacrifice in order to carry out his pursuit of form. What is most interesting in these pictures, perhaps, is the evidence of the strain and effort of will by which their deceptive serenity is achieved. In the gauntness of the dead trees, the staring inhumanity of the lonely mountain peaks, in the lowering mists along the sky-line and the brooding confusions of colour in the foreground, one can see what Coleridge meant when he spoke of the poet as the tamer of chaos.

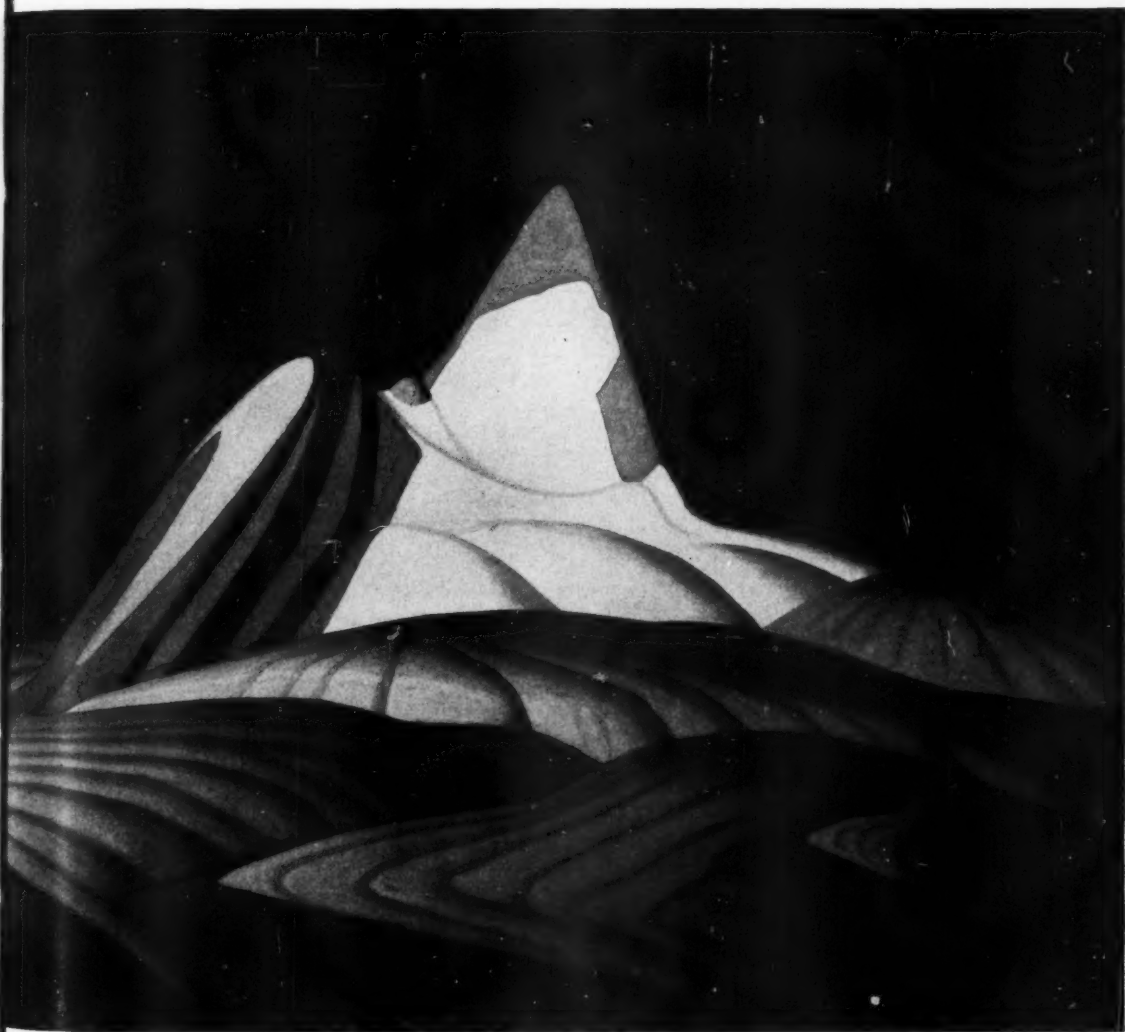
When we enter the "abstract" room we are conscious first of all of a great release of power. The painter has come home: his forms

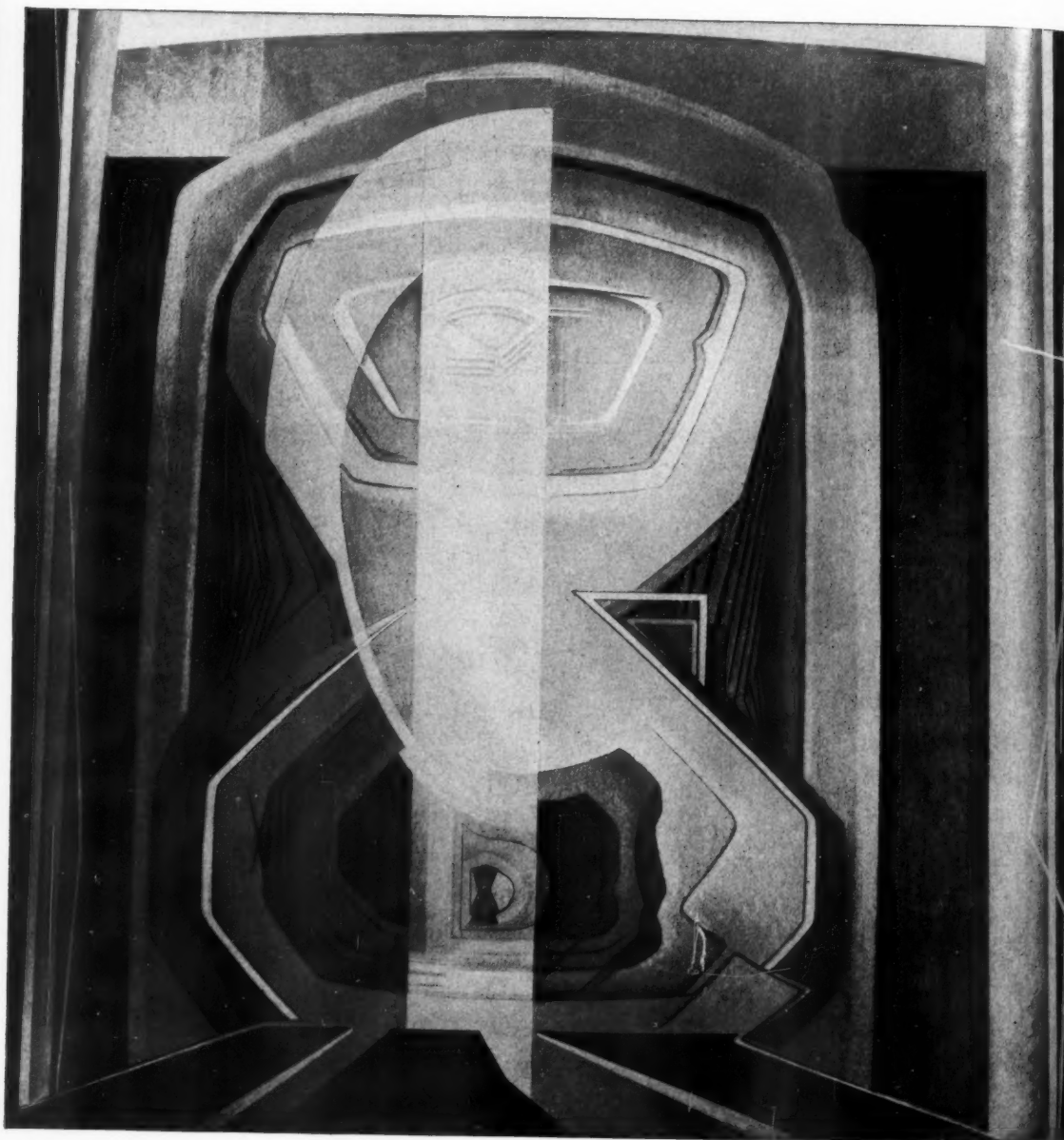
have been emancipated, and the exuberance of their swirling and plunging lines takes one's breath away. One winces at the garishness of the colour, where the whole spectrum has sometimes been flung on the canvas with a kind of joyous vulgarity, but after a while one accepts even that as part of a mood of careless opulence. Here, for the first time, Harris really finds a third dimension, and we no longer have the flatness that makes some of the earlier ones look posterish. This flatness comes from a persistent feeling that the subject being painted is not the pictorial form,

but is a natural obstacle blocking the view of the form, or, at best, a prison from which the form is struggling to escape. For such a feeling abstraction is the only possible release, and that is why Harris's abstractions have nothing in them of the self-conscious avoidance of narrative values which makes so many abstract paintings look like decorative doodles. Each one has been separately brought to birth: there is no longer even the suggestion of a formula.

The difference between non-objective and abstract painting may be suggested by the

WYREN HARRIS. *Isolation Peak*. Hart House, University of Toronto



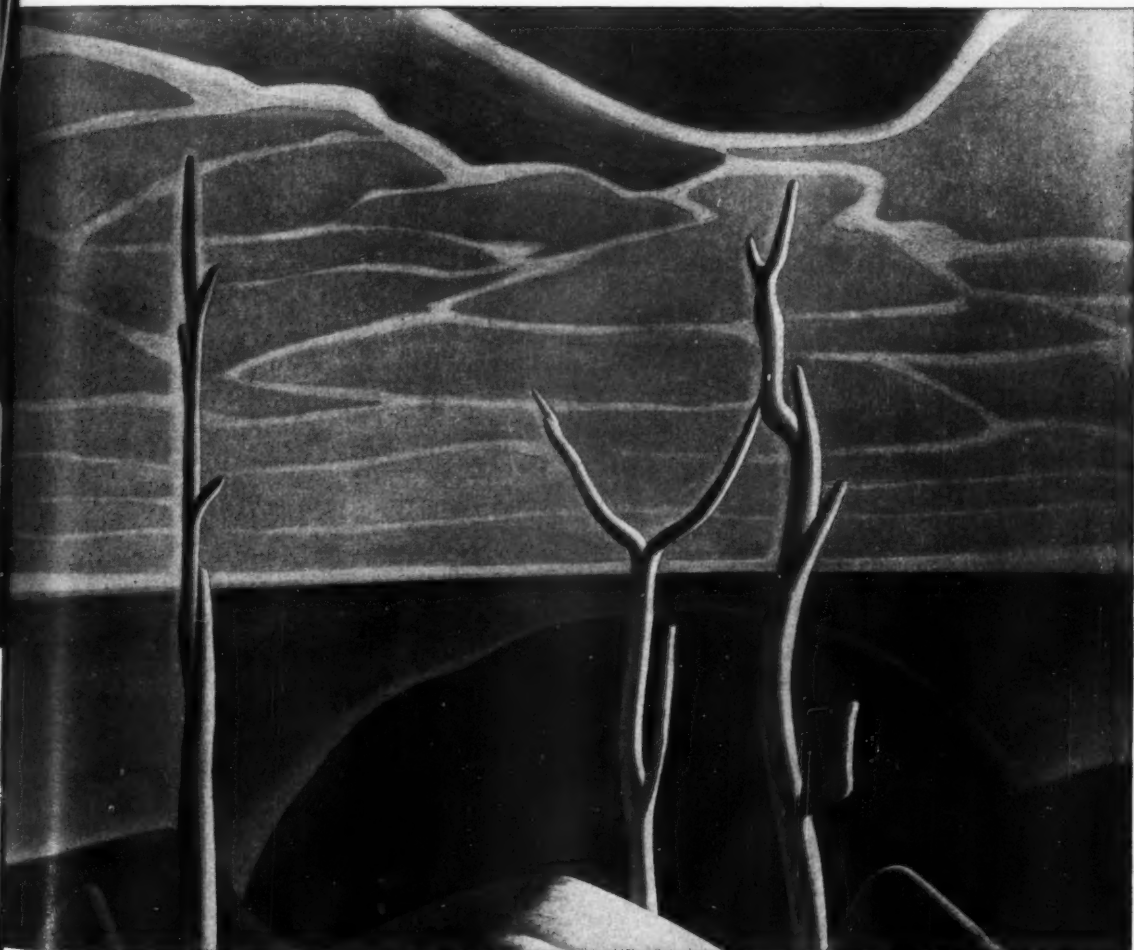


LAWREN HARRIS. *Abstract Painting*

difference between mathematics and music. Non-objective painting does for painting what mathematics does for science: it sets up a logical system of pictorial relationships which may contain any number of possible "subjects". It produces, not a picture, but a continuous series of pictorial suggestions and ideas. Abstract painting uses pictorial themes and motifs, and combines them so as to suggest a pictorial apprehension of reality which we all have but are hardly aware of. This apprehension comes out in the pictorial metaphors we use unconsciously: "a square deal", "a sphere of influence", "a line of action", and the like. It comes out in the dim feeling that the proportions of a good room or building are somehow "right", or that streamlining the design of a car gives a visual impression of

speed. It comes out in the traditional occult philosophy, which stretches from Pythagoras and Plato to Blavatsky and Ouspensky, and which assigns to arithmetical number and geometrical form a critical place in the growth of mental comprehension. One can recognize the natural origin of many of Harris's motifs: the mountain and iceberg peaks, for instance, have blended with the pyramid and the cone, and one can "interpret" them indefinitely in terms of whatever meaning one may attach to them. But they are pictures and not cryptograms, and have no single explanation or key, just as music can suggest any number of emotions or ideas without being programme music. With interpretation or without it, Lawren Harris's best abstractions are a unique and major contribution to Canadian painting.

LAWREN HARRIS. *Lake Superior*



Festival Week in Vancouver

Under the general slogan of "Arts in Our Town", the Community Arts Council of Vancouver has recently completed a successful festival of the arts. This festival was no miraculous flowering of the arts, but was the result of steady working by a council which, in turn, was conceived and born in the mind of the Vancouver branch of the Junior League, three years ago, following a scientific survey of the condition of the arts in the city.

The Council, which had Dr. Ira Dilworth of the CBC as its first President, and which is now presided over by Mrs. Reginald Arkell, states itself to be:—"a co-ordinating body established to increase and broaden cultural opportunities for Vancouver citizens. It is a clearing house and a centre of reference for groups working in social, recreational and artistic fields of endeavour. It is made up of groups and individuals interested in the arts. It does not itself initiate or carry on cultural projects. It exists purely to assist, stimulate and co-ordinate."

Evidence of the Council's power to "stimulate, assist and co-ordinate," was to be found in the festival which, like the Edinburgh Festival, was not confined to any one building or part of the city, but blossomed forth in whichever part of the city a participating group could find the theatre, hall or school most suitable to its requirements. The festival thus was not only wide in its artistic scope, but wide also in its communal aspects.

The Art Gallery was the main centre for that part of the festival dealing with the visual arts and crafts, but was used also for chamber music by The Orchestral and Chamber Music Society; poetry speaking (Canadian Poetry Association); talks on books by Canadian authors; and a children's afternoon of music and dancing by Musical Festival winners.

The Vancouver Little Theatre opened its season during festival week, in its own theatre: city high schools gave their own varied programme of the arts within their own schools in afternoon and evening showings, open to the public; and the professional musicians of the city gave a programme of symphonic music in one of the city auditoriums, without charge.

Demonstrations of weaving, totem carving, and basket making by West Coast Indians were also given in the Art Gallery.

The Gallery Association generously gave all of

its wall and floor space for the festival for a period of two weeks.

The visitor was thus enabled to see a comprehensive display of chosen works in weaving, pottery, carving, bookbinding, rug making, block-printed textiles, metal work, sculpture, ceramic figurines, leatherwork, photography, and painting. Many of the entries were from individuals, but collective exhibits came from Shaughnessy Military Hospital, the Canadian National Institute for the Blind, the B.C. Indian and Welfare Society, local sketch clubs, Painting for Pleasure groups, photographic societies, art schools, and childrens' Saturday morning classes. There was also a wall display of a town-planning survey of a blighted area in the heart of the city, which set forth present conditions and possible remedy.

Such a variety of creative effort in the arts might lead one to envision a very confused display within the Gallery. On the contrary, those responsible for the hanging and display of works made an excellent showing by exercising those principles of design which make for harmony.

The festival was the Council's most comprehensive effort to date of its power to assist, stimulate and co-ordinate the arts.

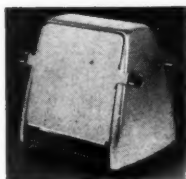
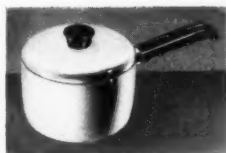
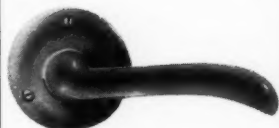
It was not a large or nationally advertised festival, but it touched and quickened as many of the arts as did the Edinburgh one, and left one with the idea that Vancouver, with its many art groups, its temperate climate, its magnificent scenic setting and its attraction as a tourist centre, was "a natural" for a great annual or biennial festival.

Such an idea might alarm the present Council which is just recovering from wrestling manfully with all the trials and hazards of a first effort; but what old Edinburgh can do in a period of austerity, could surely be done in young Vancouver, if the city were to co-ordinate to that end. And the Community Arts Council of Vancouver is established for just such a purpose.

The Council has proven what it can do with one paid secretary, small funds and voluntary helpers. In so doing, it has reached a peak, only to see a higher peak in the distance which beckons it on to greater achievements. Will it accept the challenge and co-ordinate for a festival which will be held in the summer weeks, and which will offer a feast of the arts, outdoors and indoors, to all who may be lured to the city?

C.H.S.

**THESE ARE THE ONES
THE EXPERTS PICKED**



IN THE side-shows at the circus, as the barkers call out "a chance to test your skill", crowds line up to take turns on the strength-testing machines or to throw a few baseballs at moving targets for a prize of taffy candy or a kewpie-doll. At the more grandiose midway of commerce and industry that is the Canadian National Exhibition in Toronto, a new kind of game was devised this year called "A Chance to Test Your Taste". Presented as a subsidiary attraction to the large Design Centre erected by the National Gallery of Canada and the School of Architecture, Uni-

versity of Toronto, it drew a large following of enthusiastic fans.

Besieged by continuous throngs of visitors, who moved up by the hundreds or so each hour to try the quiz, the attendants in charge found that, at the end of two weeks, over ten thousand people, young and old, rich and poor, had marked down their choices. They had based their selections on a diverse and contrasting variety of household objects in twelve different categories, ranging from door handles to easy chairs and ash trays.

Begun as a game, the quiz turned out in



Crowds of visitors flocked to take the Design Quiz at the Canadian National Exhibition this summer in Toronto.

practice to provide an unexpected opportunity for its sponsors to conduct a public opinion poll on consumer taste in relation to designs for everyday living. A tabulation of the answers made reveals that while only a small percentage of the public came anywhere near choosing exactly the same objects as the experts did (some of the experts' choices are shown here), they yet, on many points, were entirely in agreement with the judges. Three floor lamps, for example, were on view. Of these, one was a typical standard lamp in carved wood, a little over-decorated and ungainly. The other two were more functional types: they were in metal, were unembellished and could be adjusted to varying heights; one of them was somewhat superior to the other in grace of outline. The experts chose this last example, and so, too, did the vast majority of the public.

Yet no floor lamps quite as simple and functional as this specimen can be bought in any furniture or departmental store in Ontario or Quebec. Only the greatest search can reveal even a lamp approaching it for sale anywhere in Montreal or Toronto. Must we regard it as an axiom then that all lamps in Canadian stores are ornate. But why should this be so?

Evidently the average householder's choice is limited to what the average shop offers. Otherwise, why does not public demand set new standards in lighting fixtures? On the

contrary, it appears to be sales managers' standards which are being forced on the consumer, because the latter has no power of individual choice.

This same agreement on the principle that meaningless ornament serves no purpose in utilitarian articles was voiced by the majority of the public, in that section of the quiz devoted to oil-burning heaters for installation in living rooms or halls. Confronted with three specimens, two of which had decorative grilles and other fanciful stampings in metal, while a third was more logical and simple in construction, those persons answering, or at least most of them, showed no hesitation in picking the purely functional example.

The only serious divergencies between experts and public arose when toys, radios and kitchen ranges were being considered. No one radio won a clearly stated decision; public taste in this respect seemed to be as highly eclectic as are those window displays of radios which one sees in every neighbourhood electrical shop. As for cooking ranges, preferences seemed equally divided between the present streamlined ranges, with a low oven, and the newer experimental models, with a higher oven.

When final tabulations of this testing of public taste are recorded, they will be sent to manufacturers and sales agents, who thus, for the first time, will have in their hands an independent, objective sampling of consumer opinion in regard to industrial design.

Tradition—from the Roof Down

WATSON BALHARRIE

THE steep, sloping roofs, towers with minarets and peaked dormers, which characterize the style of many of Ottawa's state buildings, as well as some of those not used exclusively as administration centres, lend a certain old-world charm to a city which has already been endowed by nature with a spectacular site. The profile created, when these sloping and pointed roofs are regimented against the sky, produces a medieval effect which is in contrast with the new-world profile of industry. From a short distance away, Ottawa seems to be truly a city of sloping roofs.

In an effort faithfully to reproduce the architectural charm of another, more aged world, great care was taken to assure that the roof lines of these buildings conformed in most respects to the slopes and shapes of some earlier predecessor*. Designed originally to meet structural needs, dictated by conditions of their time, these roofs were called upon to shed at most the gentle rains of Normandy. In Ottawa these symbols of transplanted tradition must now, however, perform the herculean task of providing shelter from not only the occasional gentle Canadian rain, but also from the heavy snow of the rigorous Canadian winter. In the performance of this latter task, tradition often needs a helping hand.

If a resident of Canada's capital, or even a citizen of Canada for that matter, were asked to accept the suggestion that Ottawa's buildings be built of ice in a manner similar to the popular conception of the Eskimo igloo, his natural reaction would be a counter suggestion that the originator of such an idea be confined as a psychopathic case. His reaction would be the same were he asked to accept the paper and bamboo construction of the far eastern tropics for his home. His ridicule of such ideas would not necessarily be based on a technical knowledge of ice or of bamboo construction, but merely on his practical acquaintance with the environment and climate of Ottawa, to which these types of structure, while acceptable for logical reasons in their own latitudes, could definitely never be adapted. Yet the average Ottawan blandly accepts these old-world roofs which, definitely unsuited to our winters, are nevertheless the official style for most government buildings.

Is the average Ottawan aware of not only the additional first cost but also the large additional expenditures needed

**At the same time, certain liberties were assumed with regard to the general architectural traditions of the buildings themselves.*

New Post Office Building, Ottawa





to maintain these traditions against the ravages of ice and frost? Is he aware of the precautions which are taken in the form of steam lines, wide gutters, ice racks and barricades, to protect the ordinary passers-by from being despatched into another world at the wanton whim of large pieces of ice which may at any time suddenly dislodge themselves from sloping roofs? Does he take as a matter of course

signs which read "Danger, falling ice, do not park here?" If he has resigned himself to the inconvenience of detouring round these barricades set up in Ottawa's busiest streets, warning that ice is being cleared from roofs above, does he, never, at the same time, stop to notice that such barriers are only erected beside buildings with old-world profiles?

No amount of architecture of traditional character is justified if its use endangers human life and limb. The rules imposed by our fire insurance underwriters and by the legislators of our municipal by-laws are designed not only to protect the investments of Canadian citizens, but also to assure that the safety of human life is maintained. And yet sloping roofs are still used. That up to now only a minimum number of casualties has resulted from them can be attributed, not to the roofs themselves, but to the careful and expensive precautionary measures which have been taken to keep citizens from being injured or maimed.

With few exceptions Canada has no architecture which it can really call its own. Our buildings almost all show the influence of some imported style. As we are a compara-

Supreme Court Building, Ottawa. Above: A corner of the Confederation Building, Ottawa



tively new country, this condition may be justifiable, but why pick on a style with a roof that is so difficult to adapt to our climate!

The architectural value of the sloping roof is often superfluous. A building like the Supreme Court of Canada is a complete design—that is up to the roof line. The roof was apparently added merely to preserve an old Ottawa tradition, and performs no function whatsoever, other than to give questionable shelter from rain and snow, and to provide a limited amount of poorly lighted floor space under the slopes. This space in the roof is of no use, or is at best divided into small cubicles with deep dormers as the only source of light. In another such building, because of the slope and exterior proportion of the roof, the sills of the windows on one floor occur at a point somewhat above the heads of the personnel using these offices.

Ottawa's sloping roofs cannot be eliminated and will probably remain as a liability for many years to come, but must this architectural crime be repeated in Ottawa's buildings of the future? While it is not possible, even granted the genius of Canada's administrative

leaders, to legislate into being an improved climate for Ottawa, yet surely it would seem wise for these to accept our heritage of snow and ice and to erect our buildings to meet winter conditions. Buildings do not have to have roofs that are hazardous and expensive, and most certainly their appearance will be better and more truthfully Canadian, if they are designed to suit our climate. Only by facing such problems as these, with realism, can a true Canadian architecture ever emerge.



The Chateau Laurier Hotel, Ottawa

Dishnish Diary

ROBERT AYRE

IN A WAY, the title is misleading. I did not stay at Dishnish long enough to keep a diary. Nobody does. Dishnish is not even a flag stop. The trains rush through at a mile a minute, sending the section house bowling down the track before you can even see a face at a window. I choose to hang these notes on it because I like the name Dishnish, but I might just as well have taken Kowkash or Sunstrum, Minnipuka or Macduff, Kukatash or Mud River or Ycliff. But I have another reason. Dishnish is just about half way between Ottawa and Winnipeg, in the middle of what the trainman called "a thousand miles of crap".

Thus did the trainman thumb his nose at the great Canadian Shield. A thousand miles is only part of it; indeed, it spreads out over

nearly two million square miles. Let Dishnish be its symbol.

I remember Charles Comfort, going through this same forest, lamenting on "its vast uselessness as far as man is concerned".

Of course it's not without its uses. Its rocks are loaded with precious ores and tons of its trees are turned into newspapers to carry the bad news of the nations—and the comic strips—to the American millions. But the men who most appreciate its values are the adventurers, the men of violence. Some of them are simply killers, who go into these woods to kill, not for meat, like the aborigines, but for fun. Others kill for fur. These are few. The big wholesale slaughterers are the mining men and the pulpwood producers. They take the coun-

try by assault, tearing out its heart, lopping off its limbs; they plunder and depart.

I'm not saying this shouldn't be done. We need the ores, we need the timber and the pulpwood. But the life of the men who do it is not the life of a permanent people. There's no wooing of the land, no staying with it and persuading it and cultivating it. However long it may last, it is never more than camping.

Obviously, there can be no civilization in Dishnish; no culture, as we snobs of the cities think of culture.

The arts are limited to rings of white stones around flower beds; maybe the odd patchwork quilt; calendars and railway posters in the stations; girls torn out of *Esquire* and pinned up in bunkhouses. Yet who knows what flowers bloom in this desert air and blush unseen by the world outside? I thought I saw a van Gogh reproduction as well as a Remington in the station restaurant at Hornepayne. And maybe some child who gets his education in one of the school cars that trundle from place to place in the wilderness at the end of a way freight will grow up to be a great Canadian painter or poet. Maybe.

The wilderness makes us uncomfortable. The retired baker's wife, travelling from Vancouver home to a holiday in Birmingham, is dismayed at the endless procession of trees; the R.C.A. murmurs "vast uselessness"; the trainman contemptuously calls them crap; I, looking up from that outrageous and wise book, *The Horse's Mouth*—the richest thing that has happened since *Ulysses*—remark to myself that no Canadian could write such a book. Not yet. There is too much Dishnish.

We, who are not adventurers—trappers, prospectors, miners, timber cruisers, lumberjacks, pulp-mill operators, railroad builders—we, the ordinary people of the settled cities and towns, are uneasy as we rush through the wilderness on the Continental Limited, thinking of journey's end. This is only the road through. Our settlements may be small, callow and thin, without the density and complexity of Europe, overshadowed by the vast emptiness of Dishnish, but they are settlements, and we see ourselves in them.

For most of us, except on holidays, which are only a token, two weeks out of the fifty-two, the days of the cave-man are over. We

are settled people and that is why we are uneasy going through the wilderness. We can't see ourselves in these woods as we can see ourselves in the streets we have built or on the land we have ploughed and planted. Dishnish is the outlandish name of a country foreign to the human spirit. The Canadian Shield (or the Pre-Cambrian Shield) is the hard name of a hard land. Romantically, I have thought of the forest as the implacable antagonist. But this is too strong. It is not malignant. It is simply indifferent. From the train window I see nothing grim in it. I know you can go astray in this country and starve to death, or freeze, and your bones may never be found in a thousand years, but there is nothing terrifying in its aspect. It is all open and above-board, a hard country to live in, a country that cannot be persuaded, that can be destroyed but not cultivated, that will never be human and familiar; but, on the other hand, a country without mystery.

If the sun is shining and the poplars jingle their bright yellow coins against the clear blue sky and the conifers thrust their green spires up out of an undergrowth of maroon and bronze, the journey through can be exhilarating. For a time. But the continuous frieze of spruce and pine, poplar and tamarack, tamarack and poplar, pine and spruce, broken only by the streams and the little brown lakes, and the clearings for a railway siding or a lumber camp, with no horizon and never a hill, soon grows monotonous.

Since, as she admits, almost with a challenge, the baker's wife isn't one for reading, she interrupts the lady who is studying the *Sphere* and starts a gossip about the Royal Family. The baker plays a kind of solitaire he calls "Beat the Chinaman" or discovers in a fellow traveller a man who lived in Port Arthur when he worked there thirty years ago. No one looks at the landscape. They read, write letters, play cards, talk and sleep; go to the diner, parade up and down the station platform at every stop, like passengers pacing the deck on shipboard. Sometimes they will stare out of the window as they ponder an article in the *Reader's Digest*; talking, they will of course talk about the weather, and the blue and yellow and green will come in to them as tokens of a wonderful fall—perhaps

too dry, and certainly too good to last, for frost is in the air and soon the forest will be deep in snow. But they do not look at the forest, for it has nothing to say to them; they cannot see themselves in it.

Group of Seven country.

I try to put my thoughts together about the Group and its stamping ground, and they come out something like this.

You cannot know this country flying through it in a railway train. You must go into it by canoe, camp in it, live in it on its own terms, become as intimate with it as it will allow you to be. You must go into it as the trappers do, or the hunters and fishermen. This is the way Tom Thomson and the Group discovered it, one a born woodsman, the others city men on holiday. They sorted out its details, found variety in its sameness, rhythm in its stillness, pattern in its formlessness, order in its chaos; they exploited its simplicity and exulted in its strong colour. They got out of it all that is in it: no mystery, because it has no mystery; nothing spiritual, because it is purely physical; nothing of man, because here man is alien and cannot see himself. And they got its style.

When they proclaimed it, some were as excited as they were about this blazing new found land, but many more were outraged. They did not know Dishnish; many of them had never even passed through it in the train or, if they had, had never really looked out the window. They refused to believe that this raw and brutal land was Canada, the fair Dominion striving to find a place among the nations. They blushed with anger and shame. They did not like what they saw and they blamed the painters. They had formed their taste on dull Dutch canals and misty Highland glens, on landscapes politely tinted with cold tea; their eyes were dimmed, their vision blurred. These upstart painters were not only slandering Canada: they were slandering art; they were either blackguards or impudent tyros who didn't know their business.

But the tumult died down and the Group became an accepted and honoured tradition, even a cult, and its influence is still felt; too much felt, as some critics think. There was a strong reaction, of course. When the Philistines laid aside their arms some of the en-

lightened took them up. The Canadian Shield became anathema to the "socially conscious"; it was not worth painting because it was empty of human content.

At the same time, other painters, not socially conscious but art conscious, were quietly developing, far away from Dishnish and the Group, and with them critics whose judgments were cooler than those of the old patriots. For them there simply wasn't enough in Dishnish. It was a primitive country and its painting must be primitive. After all, art was a part of culture. They were searching for something more subtle than the wilderness could give.

Not all its detractors realize that for the Group, too, Dishnish was not enough. Varley's excursion into the north woods was short: he was always a portrait painter, always looking for human and spiritual values. Jackson has roamed as far as the Arctic, but he is never happier than when he is Père Raquette, catching in the loops of his great rhythms the human habitations and roads of Quebec. Lismer, too, loves people, and their gear and tackle, the human clutter as well as the clutter of the woods. Harris, who once painted slums, has moved through the North and the mountains to pure abstraction. That Dishnish was not enough for the Group was proven when it invited into its membership two fastidious men who had never been attracted by what Jackson calls the opulence of the wilderness, Edwin Holgate and LeMoine FitzGerald. It was demonstrated when the Group disbanded.

It was fun while it lasted. The Group smashed some grimy cobwebbed windows for Canadians and gave them, and the world outside, a new sense of Canada. For whatever you may think, the Shield, which, as the *Canada Year Book* says, "has been a stable mass" from the Cambrian period to now, covers more than half of this country. It is a mass we must reckon with. Though we leave it to the miners and the pulpwood men, we must realize that it is there and that it gives Canada her character. But it is not all of Canada. We can still get a kick out of it and out of the painting that expresses it, but we cannot build on it. We must recognize it for what it is, the wilderness, and intensify our efforts to produce civilization where it will grow, in those far-spaced settlements of ours.



*Above: Loan Exhibition
of Chinese Sculpture, 1940.
Portland Art Museum,
Portland, Oregon, as arranged
by Robert Tyler Davis*



*Newly installed display
of Chinese collection of
the Museum of the Art
Association of Montreal*

The Art Museum and the Community

ROBERT TYLER DAVIS

ART museums run rather discouragingly to a pattern, whether in the United States or in Canada. In almost any city above a certain size one easily recognizes the imposing stone mass, the impressive marble columns and the wide flight of steps that indicate the temple of Art, or more literally, the home of the Muses. We know that on penetrating the awesome building we shall find the galleries symmetrically disposed and lofty, the chief rooms devoted to oil paintings in heavy gold frames, hanging like specimens pinned to the walls in the order of class and species. Here and there will be found a bronze or marble statue, and beyond this the rooms of smaller objects living out airless lives in more or less drab cases.

The art museums of America seem to share the monotonous pattern of the "main streets" across the continent. Architecturally walled up against the outside world, the art museums have been formed by the urban economic pattern which also produced the chaotic and strident monotony of the congested business streets. Yet we all know that each town has its own character and personality. As we get to know its life more intimately we find characteristics that stamp it with an individuality that will be duplicated in no other place. Similarly, as we know and use an art museum, we learn the particular distinctions of its collections and the individual character of its operations.

Our own generation has inherited the shell of an old conception of an art museum—a conception which held that our museums should strive to imitate the completeness of the great European museum collections and the impressiveness of the abandoned palaces which house them. Most American museums have succeeded well in imitating the impressiveness and lack of convenience of the great palaces; and to an extraordinary extent we have succeeded in accumulating a rich representation of the art of other civilizations and times. The handsome buildings and the great collections are tangible evidence of the wealth

and enthusiasm poured by our forefathers into the effort to bring the evidence of culture to our shores. But the age of marble palaces and fabulous collections is fading along with the great private fortunes. Although many museums are still technically in private hands, all are actually public institutions. As public institutions they have neither the resources nor the freedom of the great private collectors.

The problems of the art museum in the next decade or two will continue to be numerous and complex. There are still private fortunes and private collections that are promised or may yet come to public museums. To this extent the museum will continue to keep some of its private character. But with years of art education in the schools and colleges, and the enforced travel of millions of young people during two European wars, there is now a public which feels the futility of an exclusive concern with the material values of life, which has developed a curiosity about the world of art, and looks to the art museum for leadership in revealing the spiritual values it seeks in the arts.

To meet this public demand with demonstrations that are clear and honest is a major responsibility for art museums. It is not only a moral obligation, but one affecting the material existence of the museum. Only as museums attract public support will they find the public funds and the mass of small private contributors to keep themselves going.

First of all we must rid ourselves and our public of a fixed notion that marble columns, stately staircases and dark hand-painted pictures in heavy gold frames are the essence of the art museum. A museum is essentially a collection of objects which should be as varied and as fine in quality as possible and drawn from all the manifestations of the creative spirit,—painting, sculpture, prints, as well as decorative arts.

The museum no longer wants or needs as many objects as it can pile up. The enormous accumulation of the Metropolitan Museum of New York, for instance, has proved such an

embarrassment that it is now encouraging smaller and newer museums to accept long-term loan of works of art.

What the art museum may become in the next twenty years is hard to say, though a few general considerations are becoming clear. There will still be a collection of objects, but the emphasis will be less on accumulation and more on making the fullest use of the collections. Already museum walls are less cluttered with pictures, and cases less jammed with things. Experiments are constantly being made to improve lighting and labelling so that exhibits can be better seen and understood. The signs are not yet very positive, but it looks as if the art museum were gradually being made over for the enjoyment and use of people. The professional museum worker, as he struggles with administrative problems, hopes at least to have the time to study carefully the objects in his care, to know them well so that he can invent ways of using them that will make it possible for other people to share his knowledge and his pleasure. However much administrative talents and the ability to get along with people may be desirable in a museum director or curator, his real value in his job depends on his knowledge of works of art and his imaginativeness and inventiveness in presenting what he knows.

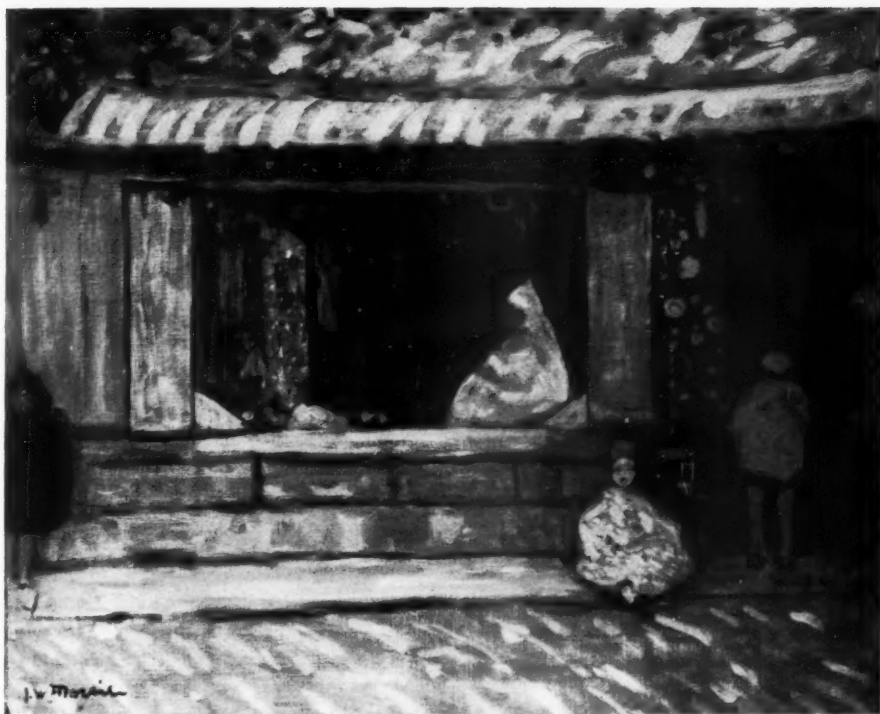
In addition to this cloistered aspect of his job (on which he is allowed to spend far too little time) the art museum director must know his community. The individual pattern of the community will establish, more than anything else, what is to be done and how it is to be done. This individual pattern depends on many things: the reasons for the founding of the museum and the character of its founders; the principal industries and activities in the community; the character of neighbouring communities and its relation to them; the characteristics of its physical environment; and a host of other qualities of lesser or greater importance.

In any community, however, there are three groups who are closely related to the activities of the art museum. These are the artists, the art teachers, and the collectors. Much of what the museum does or is able to do will depend on how numerous these groups are and how vigorous. No art museum can afford

to ignore the creative work being done in its own region. In fact the art museum is the place where both the townspeople and the tourist should be able at all times to see the best examples of what is being done by local artists, whether painters, sculptors or craftsmen. Everything possible should be done to bring the artist together with the community and to promote the use and understanding of the artists' contribution to our society. In this the art museum will have the advice, co-operation and example of whatever collectors there are. The most enlightened and enthusiastic users of the art museum are likely to be the art teachers of the community. When they find the stimulus they need in the museum their enthusiasm spreads by contagion to their classes and very shortly into the homes of their pupils. Any art museum serving a community with a strong group of artists, collectors and art teachers is in a favoured position to develop its individual character by meeting the needs of these groups and their friends.

In addition to these, there are groups in ever increasing numbers who have partial or related interests in the arts,—clubs, study groups, churches, and others. Once the art museum is orientated towards people, the possibilities of usefulness are limited only by the number of the museum staff, the time at their disposal, and their imagination in analysing activities and supplying needs. When it can employ more people, and better trained and qualified ones, the art museum will more fully meet the needs that are suggested in working with people.

We shall not be rid of our marble palaces very soon. Few museum directors will have the satisfaction of planning new buildings to give pleasure and instruction to their public, and to serve as appropriate background for specific works of art. But we can all modify our present housing with the object of showing our collections so that they have greater meaning; we can try to get more time in which to know our communities, and some leisure in which to exercise our inventive faculties, all towards the end of creating an atmosphere which serves and expresses the character of our particular community. The result will surely be a museum that is more truly a home of the Muses.



JAMES WILSON MORRICE. *Tangiers, A Shop.*

Le Musée de la Province de Québec

Le Musée de la Province de Québec

DONALD W. BUCHANAN

This is the fifth in our series of articles on important Canadian collections.

IN THE fine arts collection of the Museum of the Province of Quebec, a generous attempt is made to honour all those artists of major or minor reputation who, either through birth, training or the practice of their art, have been in any way connected with the Province of Quebec.

To be sure, dozens of dull paintings by romantic or derivative artists like Charles de Belle, who once had fleeting reputations in bygone salons, are included. Yet men, as diversely talented as James Wilson Morrice, Horatio Walker, Edwin Holgate and Alfred Pellan are represented by important works, and the younger artists of Quebec are here in full force.

When the present curator, Paul Rainville,

took over about fifteen years ago, the collection was already large but it had many curious gaps. Members of the Group of Seven such as A. Y. Jackson and Edwin Holgate, whose paintings were intimately related to the province, were not represented, nor were many of the more independent painters of merit from Montreal. On the other hand, that worthy but by no means consistently great artist, Suzor-Coté, who painted portraits of rugged habitant types, pastel studies of gigantesque nudes and Quebec landscapes in strict impressionist technique, had, all told, 110 works in the collection. This number, which ranged through large oil canvases to drawings and sculpture, did seem to give him undue prominence in the museum.



Tapestry designed by Alfred Pellán, executed by Irène Auger

Le Musée de la Province de Québec

ALFRED PELLÁN

Still Life

*Le Musée
de la Province
de Québec*



Intent on bringing alive the principle that this should be a museum devoted to showing all paintings of interest related to Quebec or done by its sons and daughters, Mr. Rainville has accomplished much in recent years to make the museum more truly comprehensive in scope. Most of the many recommendations he has made for the purchase of more contemporary work have been acted upon by the Office of the Provincial Secretary through which the museum is financed. Fortified with two fine Morrice canvases, that had already been purchased in the nineteen twenties, he went on to buy several Group of Seven paintings, also other canvases by various artists previously thought too "advanced" for Canadian taste, such as Alfred Pellán and more recently Claude Dallaire. Yet this daring has been tempered greatly at times; in fact the general average of the collection has been kept on a thoroughly orthodox basis by the acquisition, in almost equal proportion, of numbers of highly conventional and romantic paintings of Quebec scenery. If you, however, don't appreciate such trifles as these or such dying shadows of "salon art", most obviously to be seen here in a cloying study of a reclining nude by F. S. Coburn, then you have only to look elsewhere on the same walls to find more personal and independent work by artists such as Jori Smith and Stanley Cosgrove.

Although unrepresented in other public collections in Canada, Jori Smith has three canvases here, one of which, a portrait of a farm girl, *Rose*, is excellent. Also almost every facet of Stanley Cosgrove's varied work can be studied. This, too, applies to Pellán, whose portraits, still life and decorative studies are all shown, as well as a design he did for a rug executed by Irène Auger which won a prize in the competition for sculpture and decorative arts held by the provincial government last year. In addition, several newcomers, men and women of talent, whose reputations have as yet not spread far beyond their own neighbourhoods, have been able to gain entry to this collection. Two such, worth noting and watching, are Albert Rousseau and Claude Picher.

On the whole, the more vigorous art of the province does have its innings here. The one noticeable exception is provided by Paul-

Emile Borduas. It seems strange that this painter, with his genuine lyricism of expression, although it is a lyricism masquerading under the difficult terminology of "automatisme," should remain unhonoured here.

The Museum, itself, when you see it across the park of the Plains of Abraham, looks large and imposing enough, but the ground floor is devoted to the provincial archives, the second floor to a museum of natural history,



CLAUDE PICHER. *Portrait*

Le Musée de la Province de Québec

and only the top floor, with its two main galleries and a few small alcoves, is available for the fine arts. In this limited area, sculpture, paintings and drawings, also examples of wood-carving and cabinet-making from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries have all to be shown. The curator, Paul Rainville, has made great efforts to display the collection properly, but the odds are against him, for he simply does not have enough room at his disposal. The best he has been able to do is to introduce a few movable partitions, by which means he has grouped furniture and paintings together in a series of temporary

alcoves which form settings which are often quite charming, with their air of authentic Quebec *décor*.

The illustrations shown here indicate that several painters such as Pellan, Holgate and Morrice are represented by particularly choice examples of their work. Certainly this particular *Still Life* by Pellan is, both from the handling of pigment and colour and by its composition, to be described as one of this artist's most sensitive efforts. As for *Coolie Girl, Jamaica* by Holgate, it is richly and delicately coloured, much less mannered in outline certainly than are some of his more typically Canadian figures, with "Group of Seven" backgrounds. Not illustrated, but worthy of com-

this same praise cannot be extended to the more historical portraits. Those by Antoine Plamondon are surpassed by several examples of this artist's work in Ottawa and Toronto, while those pictures by Théophile Hamel of the mid-nineteenth century bourgeoisie of Quebec are thoroughly dull both in spirit and execution. But this criticism perhaps applies justly to everything Hamel ever did. Something much more alive, even if crudely rendered by an untutored painter, is the portrait of the artist, with a tomahawk in one hand and with a child, carrying bow and arrow, seated on his knee, by that little known Huron Indian artist, Zacharie Vincent*.

The annual grants received from the Pro-



HORATIO WALKER

*La Batture de
l'Île aux Grues*

Water colour

*Le Musée
de la Province
de Québec*

parison with the best, is the fine view of *The Bay of Rio de Janeiro*, by Jacques de Tonnancour, in which this artist has translated his nervous yet freely flowing drawing into a similar calligraphic use of paint on canvas. Another artist who has a well chosen sample of his work displayed is André Bieler. In his painting, *After Mass*, he has made an emphatic and satisfactory recording of a scene, unique to rural Quebec, where, before the church steps after mass, scores of farmers gossip together as they prepare to drive home in their horse-drawn buggies.

As the reproductions on these pages prove, the contemporary portraits in the collection are good and sometimes even excellent. Yet

vincial Government, by which the Museum is supported, have allowed for the spending, on an average, of about six to seven thousand dollars each year on the acquisition of paintings; some money is available also for the purchase of sculpture. In addition, many important new works have been obtained recently as a result of the annual artistic competitions financed by the Office of the Provincial Secretary. Large sums are offered as prizes, sometimes for painting or sculpture, at other times for decorative art. Winning entries become the property of the province and are housed permanently in the Museum. They are valuable additions and, as with

*Reproduced in *Canadian Art*, Vol. V. No. 3. p. 139.

Continued on page 95



STANLEY COSGROVE. *Portrait*



JORI SMITH. *Rose*

Le Musée de la Province de Québec

EDWIN H. HOLGATE. *Coolie Girl, Jamaica*



Toronto as an Art Centre

Just over a year ago *Canadian Art* published an article by Robert Ayre called "Montreal as an Art Centre". You may remember this enthusiastic report and, too, its inference that Toronto had better look to its artistic laurels. In short: was Toronto the equal in painting of Montreal?

Now I readily agree with Mr. Ayre that the cosmopolitan climate of Montreal is "heady", and that it has artists who are doing exciting work. I will also concede that a happy number of Montrealers are interested in pictures. Obviously the aesthetic weather in Toronto is more austere, and its citizens are less openly demonstrative about practically everything. Yet surely the pertinent question is—what is the quality and promise of contemporary Toronto painting?

The Toronto art scene, like that of its alleged rival, is a thing of several planes. At the public gallery level, certainly, Toronto has a slight edge. There is the Royal Ontario Museum with its magnificent Chinese section, and the Art Gallery with a permanent collection rather more comprehensive than that of the Art Association of Montreal. The latter's Mr. Davis is, I understand, an enterprising type, but then so is Mr. Martin

Baldwin, the director of the Art Gallery here. For some time now, for example, he has collaborated with his opposite numbers in the United States, such as the director of the Gallery at Toledo, which has made possible on both sides of the border various impressive joint exhibitions. Toronto, too, as I have written elsewhere here, was responsible for the organization of the big Lawren Harris retrospective exhibition, which in due course will go to most large Canadian cities.

In commercial galleries, on the other hand, Montreal is well ahead. Torontonians have so far shown no appetite for the "up two flights of stairs" type of *atelier*, nor the meal of "experimental work", which is customarily the reward for the climb. This is hard on the unknown, or more "advanced and/or serious" painter. The only real chance for the former are the annual Ontario Society of Artists exhibitions (whose decisions are not infallible), or an invitation from the Canadian Group of Painters. Cutting the ice here is hard.

The more "serious" artist is better served. Eaton's Fine Art Galleries, on the merchant prince level, is doing an unusually conscientious and enterprising job. The contribution of the Laing Galleries which *must* sell pictures to stay open, is also creditable. The provocative exhibition, last spring of J. L. Shadbolt is evidence of its effort to do what it can for serious painting. A newcomer, the Gavin Henderson Galleries, looks good. Among other winter plans is a showing of recent Muhlstock paintings.

Still at the top, however, is the Picture Loan Society, not really a commercial venture at all, whose perceptive and inimitable director, Douglas Duncan, has done so much to forward artists of the calibre of Milne, Paraskeva Clark, Schaefer and Jack Nichols. A sabbatical year (due to valid personal reasons) denied the public last winter its accustomed diet of first-class one-man shows from this source. The year, 1948-1949, will make amends—exhibitions by people such as Milne, Jack Nichols* and Wilfred Beny are all now being planned.

Then, in a variety of settings, there are other activities you may share in, if you wish. At the Art Gallery of Toronto, besides imported "Pictures of the Month" (the current one is *Moses before the Burning Bush* by Dirk Bouts), there

*Jack Nichols, after completing his Guggenheim fellowship, is now in British Columbia, where he is teaching this winter at the Vancouver School of Art.

R. YORK WILSON. *L'entrechat*

Courtesy: Eaton's Fine Art Galleries



will be successively, among other exhibits, the Royal Canadian Academy, the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour, the Ontario Society of Artists, and the Canadian Society of Sculptors. At the art gallery in Hart House (an activity directed by a committee of this large students' union at the University of Toronto), the schedule includes such showings as works by the abstract artist, Percy Tacon and a combined exhibition by the Montrealers, de Tonnancour, Dumouchel, Pellán, Webber, Garneau and Roberts. Eaton's, too, has a full series including Eric Goldberg and R. York Wilson.

Toronto is a strange place. That, anyhow, is what a lot of outsiders think: "a state of mind surrounded by 800,000 people" is the definition of one alien wit. I am not concerned in this piece with the psychology of Toronto, but I will agree that the local painters are hard to ferret out. In Montreal they band together in active groups, as in *Prisme d'Yeux* and the Contemporary Arts Society. Here they are largely lone wolves, spread all around and about the sprawling metropolitan area, most of them working on their own, and in their own way. This is producing an unusual diversity of results.

There is A. Y. Jackson with his familiar and valuable contribution to art in Canada. In quite another vein you have David Milne, the uniquely gifted apostle of the simple country joys. There is Yvonne McKague Housser, an artist with real intellectual penetration and quite enough technique, who, if she can free herself of a residual Group of Seven influence and *be herself*, may emerge as one of the best Canadian painters. Comfort, Ogilvie, Schaefer and Aldwinckle, all youngish, and former war artists, have made their mark, each in his particular line. Paraskeva Clark, meticulous craftsman and sensitive observer, has carved out her own special niche.

Sculpture has its significant contributors. I think particularly of Frances Loring, Florence Wyle, Emanuel Hahn, Elizabeth Wyn Wood, and Stephen Trenka. Then the young and original Elford Cox promises exceedingly well.

W. H. Yarwood, Murray Bonnycastle and John Hall have yet seemingly to find their true ground. The stylized studies of the first have the earnest of important things ahead. That is so, also, of Bonnycastle, a retiring talent who has still to do himself justice in public.

It has been rather the mode in Montreal to describe contemporary Toronto art as simply derivative from the Group of Seven. The retort discourteous here is that Montreal remains tied to Europe's apron strings. There are wry smiles



F. H. VARLEY. *Crescent Moon*

Courtesy: Gavin Henderson Galleries



JACK NICHOLS. *Mother and child*

Lithograph

Courtesy: Picture Loan Society

about artists who are supposed to have dedicated themselves to "doing Picassos". Neither stricture is, I suppose, wholly untrue. Painters in both places admit to a continuing need to assimilate national and international art values.

But that surely is healthy, with the heartening element the emergence, in Montreal and Toronto alike, of a lot of strong, fresh work and a heightened public interest. I, at least, have been unable to find a satisfactory yardstick for comparison of their respective merits as centres of art; the inner qualities at the moment are too disparate. Still, this *should* be said—earnest, self-conscious Toronto is attentive, as never before, to serious painting. Now, Mr. Ayre, is no time for Montreal to start feeling smug.

ANDREW BELL

Man and Stone

HARRY MAYEROVITCH

As an architect, Harry Mayerovitch is used to long-term projects; but as a busy architect, working under pressure, he is faced from day to day with immediate problems, demanding, as often as not, snap decisions. As a graphic artist of note—he was an art director in the Graphics Section of the National Film Board and himself created some of the most striking posters to come out of Canada during the war—he worked under the same urgency.

It was for relief from the tyranny of hurry that he turned to sculpture. The change of pace brought him deep satisfaction. In flying from one tyrant, he had to submit to another, whom he calls "this silent goddess"; adjusting himself to slow time, to the life of stone, was a painful experience; but in the end, he feels, the discipline brought him a new strength and a new freedom.

Mr. Mayerovitch's first piece of sculpture was the figure of a sleeping girl. Last summer, outdoors at St. Donat in the Laurentians, he forgot the telephone in his Montreal office, the conferences in Ottawa, the problems of drawing-board and contract form, and all the innumerable details of his profession, while he hacked away at his head of a Haganah soldier, twelve inches by twelve by eighteen. It is still unfinished, but already he is busy making sketches for a stone bas-relief, twelve feet by five, he will carve for one of his buildings, the Jewish Cultural Centre in Montreal being erected by the United Jewish People's Order. It will be the heroic figure of the prophet Amos. He has undertaken, as well, to paint a mural for the interior of the building, forty feet by ten, the subject to be taken from Jewish history.

FOR a long time I have wanted to carve a stone. I can't remember ever having come across a gleaming block of marble or granite that I didn't feel its mocking challenge. So I suppose it was inevitable that I should one day find myself standing before a 250-pound block of Indiana limestone, beautifully square and smooth, frightening in its bulk and impassiveness. It was an exciting and terrifying moment. Here, it was obvious, was something not lightly to be undertaken.

You could, perhaps, be light-hearted if you strolled off into the country with a water-colour box tucked under your arm—even if you knew beforehand that you might have to leave your half-dozen sketches under a bush. You would at least have had a pleasant afternoon. It would be nothing to worry about. You could always try again.

But when you face this immovable thing, and, with tight-lipped determination, strike your first shaky blow to dislodge a chip no larger than a pea—then you know that you are in the presence of something big and implacable. You shudder with the sudden realization that this is but one chip of the millions

that there must be in one and a half cubic feet of stone. The block has doubled in size before your very eyes, and cold perspiration forms on your forehead.

But it is too late to turn back now. You are irrevocably enslaved, and you will be shackled to this silent goddess for a very, very long time. For there is something sacrilegious about the removal of that first chip. Having despoiled this pure and shining thing you now find yourself immersed in sin beyond redemption. Yet there is a desperate glimmer of hope that, if you can replace what you have taken away by something more beautiful, your transgression may perhaps be forgiven. So you hazard another stroke. You now begin to think that you see a vague form emerging—a smiling will-o'-the-wisp beckons and you are led deeper and deeper into timeless layers of stone. But slowly—slowly and painfully. For it is as though the stone is wreaking a bitter vengeance for its million years of subterranean confinement. Yes—you will be forced to relive some of those years. You are in a strange underground wonderland where, you are convinced, the clocks move at one-tenth their

normal speed. You make your decisions as rapidly as in your former life, but these decisions are put into effect so slowly and with such exasperating deliberation that you sense the presence of a giant power resisting your every blow.

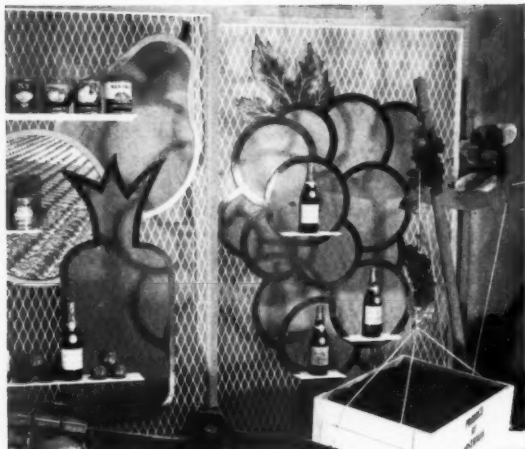
And to intensify your ordeal, there will be fear. Fear that the elusive form you seek to embrace may be crushed by a miscalculated stroke, fear that you may have strayed too far along a path which you cannot again recover. Certain paths you may not even explore. These you learn to avoid after many heart-rending attempts have demonstrated your folly. For in these catacombs there are strict rules—though they are not posted at every turning for you to read. You must discover them through endless patience and probing—and failure to learn them means destruction. But you cannot give up. At every corner you glimpse the fulfilment of your dream. You are more confident now, yet the battle between you and the stone becomes more grim. It is as though there is a desperate struggle for possession of this dream.

But little by little this everchanging image becomes less misty, and time—slow time—has caused it to shed all that was ephemeral, insignificant, superficial, impressionistic — all

that was unable to withstand the steady grinding of thought and the fiery furnace of analysis. What now stands radiant before you is, true enough, what you had so passionately desired—but in final realization was not entirely your own. The idea, which you had made pure and noble, now possessed a new simplicity and grandeur. The stone had not been defeated, but had found new life in your concept. You had achieved the miraculous synthesis which is art.

But greater magic yet had been wrought. For, just as the weight of centuries had made the stone hard and unyielding, so your own ordeal by time had steeled you. Yes, you had grown strong, — uncommonly strong — so strong that the walls which had seemed to confine you no longer terrified you. You were free in a way you had never known. You now felt the clear, confident glow of a freedom which had grown out of discipline, first imposed by a stern master and then, by habit, self-imposed. This was not the freedom of emotional delirium or frenzied hysteria which leads only to despair. This was a clear-sighted, penetrating freedom, not fearing to recognize limitations or face necessities, and so able to rise above them to greater conquests.





Corner of Australian Government display, Canadian National Exhibition, 1947. Produced by the National Film Board, Ottawa. Designer: Gordon Stranks.



One of a series of panels, produced by the National Film Board, for display by the Canadian Government in Mexico. Designer: Gaston Sarraute.

Portable cases and background panel for a small display of Canadian books sent to Paris, 1947. Produced and designed by the Exhibition Commission, Ottawa.



Two Steps Forward

Canada used to have a reputation for always doing the wrong thing in exhibition design. This was nowhere more true than at the great international fairs, where we frequently before the war used to participate, by erecting commercial and other displays of no great merit. For example at the great Paris Exposition of 1937 our originality could hardly have been called excessive; we simply put up something that looked vaguely like a miniature grain elevator and in this we showed handicrafts, canned salmon and photographs in heavy blackwood borders with brass labels.

Well, we have progressed slightly; we are no longer content to hang photographs in mournful frames. But we sometimes still depend on coloured "transparencies", as they are called, by which means a yellowish light filters from behind, through tinted photographs of Okanagan orchards and of St. Lawrence river scenes.

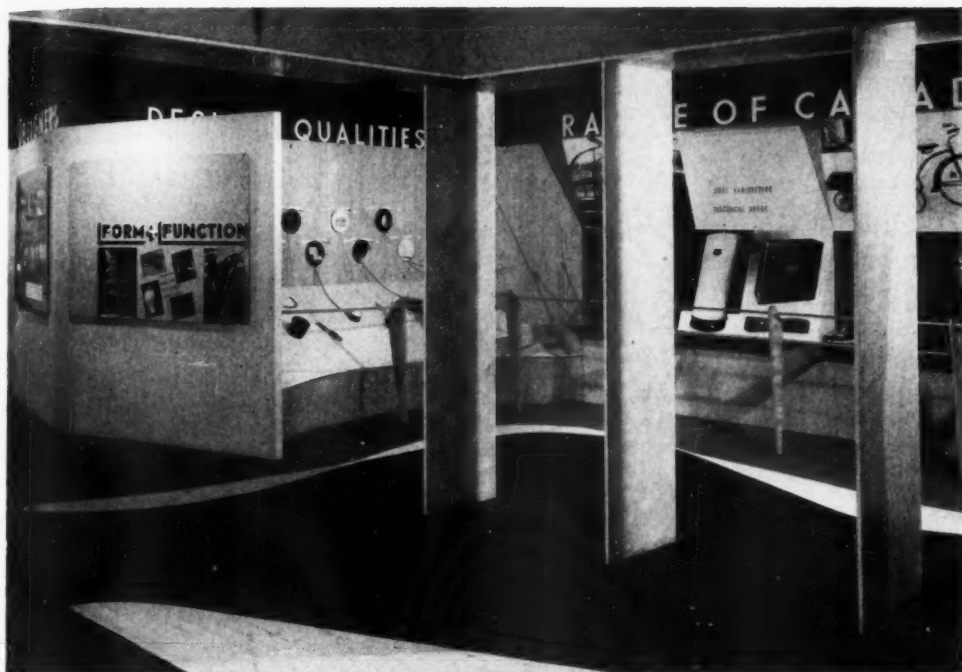
This last method continues to be followed in the luxurious exhibition hall maintained by the Canadian Pacific Railway in the lower lobby of the Royal York Hotel in Toronto. Fortunately in the exhibitions prepared in recent years in Ottawa for distribution abroad more intelligent ideas in general are beginning to be adopted.

This is largely because both the National Film Board, in its displays division, and the Exhibition Commission of the Department of Trade and Commerce, in its workshop in Ottawa, recently employed on several occasions young architects to help with the design of exhibitions. Thus new life and new ideas were brought into play. Younger artists have also gone into this work. One such is Tom Wood, a former war artist with the navy, who is now designer for the Exhibition Commission.

These men have done much to bring a new grace and simplicity of construction into displays; they have used documentary photographs to advantage, and they have made lively three-dimensional presentations of charts and statistics.

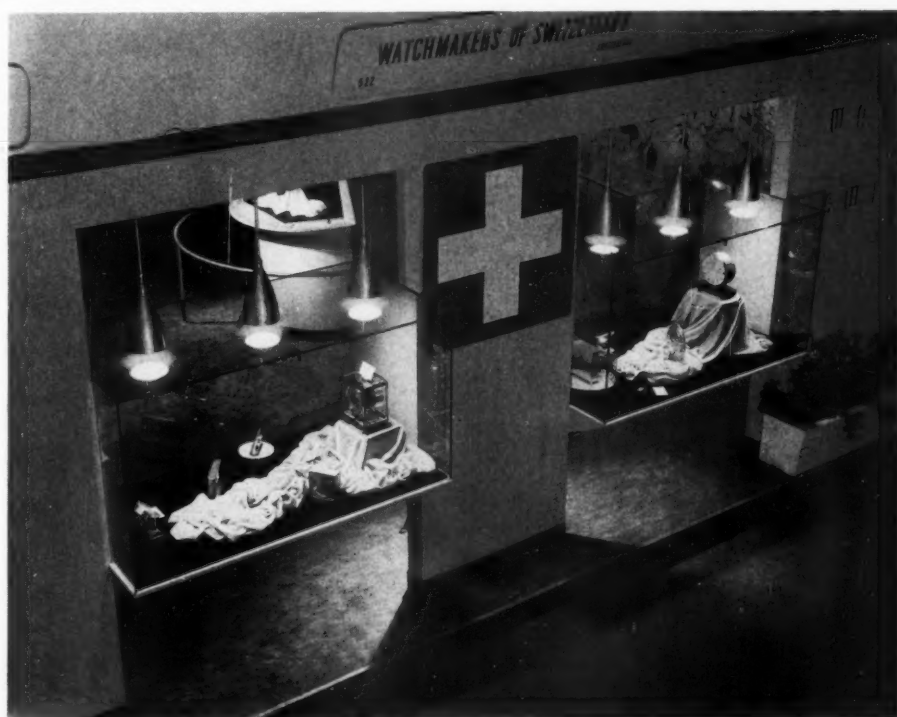
Yet for every two steps forward, we seem to take one step backwards. A fine and directly expressed architectural structure is sometimes created for a trade display, but then is ruined, when papier-mâché waterfalls or other excrescences are plastered in crowded profusion across simple frameworks and harmonious backgrounds.

One Step Backward



A corner of the large Design Centre display, a joint production of the National Gallery of Canada and the School of Architecture, University of Toronto, as erected at the Canadian National Exhibition, 1948. Designer: George Englesmith

Below: Part of the exhibit presented by the Watch makers of Switzerland, International Trade Fair, Toronto, 1948. Produced by Worden Watson Design Associates, Toronto. Designer: Arthur Worden



Particularly good marks go to the small exhibition Canada sent to the International Fur Fair in Berne last year. Closer to home our Exhibition Commission made a noble attempt to improve standards when it produced the fine clean dignity of the reception hall interior at the International Trade Fair held in Toronto in June last.

But why do such mediocre and heavy-handed displays continue to be presented by nearly all our commercial corporations. As a result, we find that some of the best work done by Canadian design studios has not been for Canadian employers, at all, but for foreign sponsors. To be seen at the Canadian National Exhibition in 1947 were interesting French and Australian government displays on which Canadians worked: in fact, the National Film Board designers in Ottawa

created most of the Australian presentation. The same applied to the International Trade Fair held more recently. Here nothing really first class could be found in any of the display art that went into the Canadian commercial booths, yet everyone flocked to see and praise the exhibit put on by the Swiss Watch Industry. But it wasn't a Swiss design; it had been worked out by a Toronto display firm, which happened to find in these Swiss employers that imaginative collaboration between sponsor and designer that is so often lacking in the more purely Canadian efforts.

Our Canadian National Exhibition, largest permanent fair in the world, as we proudly claim, must yet be the most jejune or most vulgar of all such great fairs. Here are hundreds and hundreds of commercial booths. But the best of

Exhibit describing the National Parks of Canada, produced by the Exhibition Commission, Ottawa, and erected at the Canadian National Exhibition, 1948. Designer: Gordon Stranks



them are no better than a good department store window, and there are mighty few as satisfactory as that. Some are no more than pedlar's pitches.

Any European fair worth its salt would at least impose a minimum of design standards on those buying space. There should be, at least, an architectural staff to give advice and to bring improvements in each pavilion. But Torontonians eyes must be blind, for such supervision is absent.

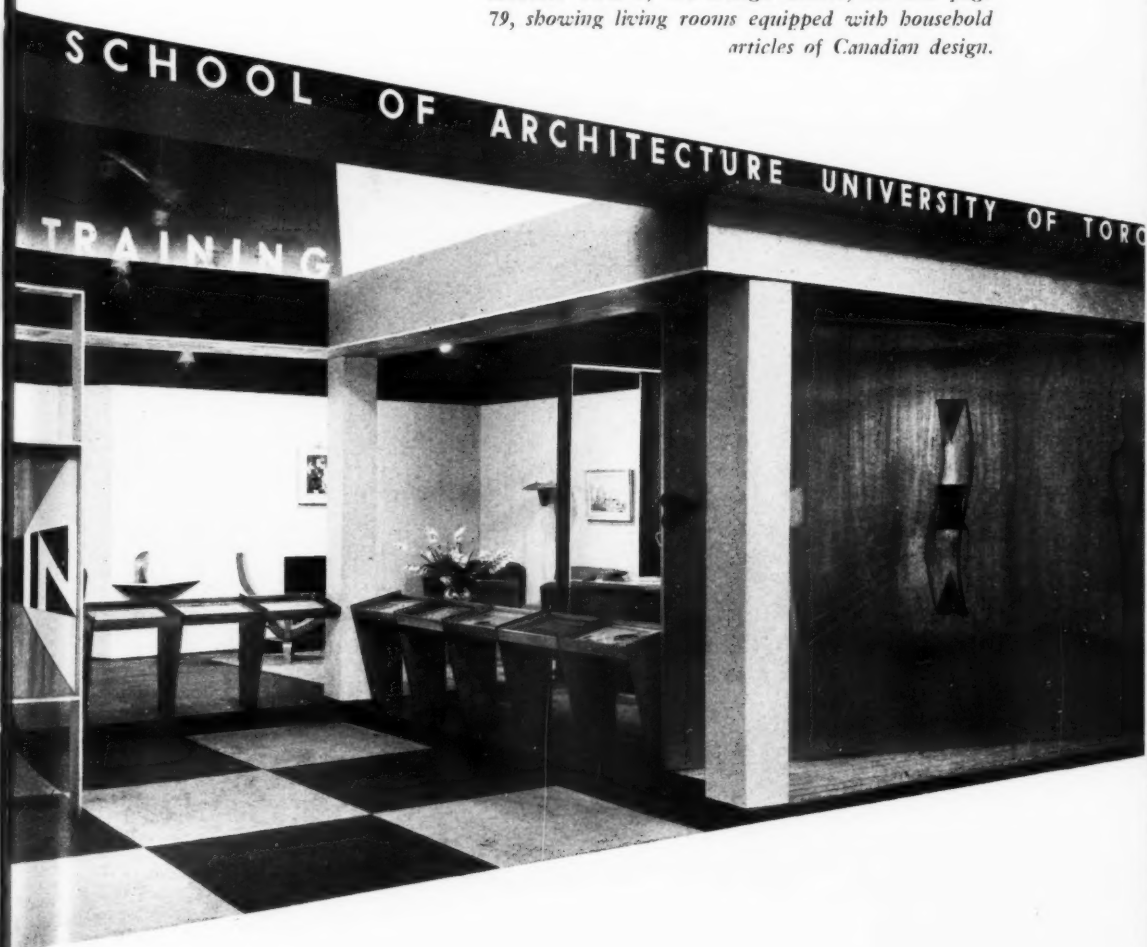
Here and there, however, even at the C.N.E. a few improvements were to be noticed this year. The Design Centre erected jointly by the National Gallery and the School of Architecture of the University of Toronto was an attempt to project better standards of design. This display was unique in its simple directness of presentation

of the things it set out to say,—in this instance the story of those talents and that training needed to produce first-rate industrial artists in Canada.

George Englesmith, an architect from the university, worked out the plan of this display. Also John Hall, who is associated likewise with the university, prepared another neat presentation of everyday objects in the "Woman's World" centre which was financed by a group of manufacturers. Otherwise except for one or two government displays made by the Exhibition Commission there was little or no sign of a fresh approach. Even here, as in the Parks Branch booth which we illustrate, there was a tendency towards over-elaboration of art work on many of the panels.

D.W.B.

Another view of the Design Centre, see also page 79, showing living rooms equipped with household articles of Canadian design.



COAST TO COAST IN ART

Rent a Painting from Your Public Library

Thirty or forty years ago, the conception of a public library that would lend books to any citizen of the community had only begun to take root in many Canadian cities. But today their establishment is widespread, and we feel that a town or city is, indeed, backward which does not possess one. They have progressed, too, in function; from many of them you can now borrow documentary motion pictures and recordings of good music as well as books.

Why then should they not lend out paintings also? This question the administrators of the Windsor Public Libraries recently asked themselves. They have answered it now by embarking on a picture rental scheme. While the collection they have begun with is a modest one, it does include originals by A. Y. Jackson, John Alfsen and Dorothy Stevens, and many fine framed reproductions. Monthly rentals range from 25c for reproductions to \$1.25 for the larger paintings.

If this method of introducing more of our citizens to the direct appreciation of art in their own homes proves successful, then a fruitful

new field of activity will be open to our more enterprising libraries everywhere.

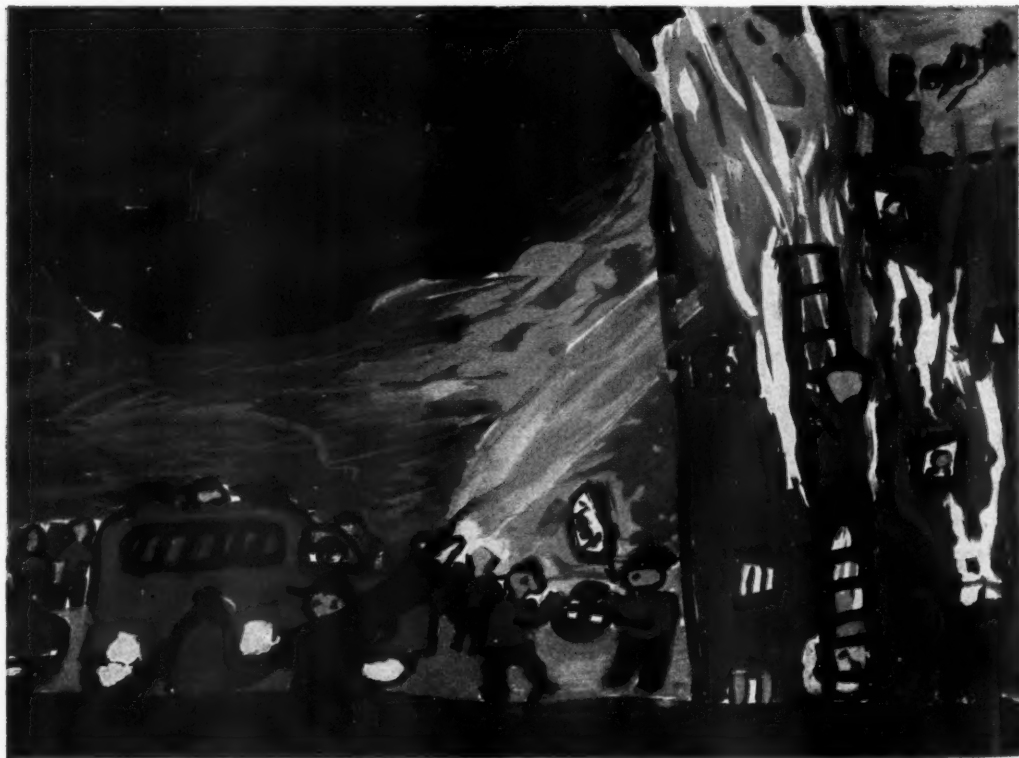
Child Art in Creative Education

Art by Saskatchewan youth, as turned out both by children in primary grades and by adolescents in high school, continues to attract a "good press" as a newspaperman would say.

For the second time recently, the publication listing broadcasts to Saskatchewan schools, printed by the provincial department of education, is using on its cover a colour plate of an amusing drawing by a school child (see below). This was done during a regular classroom period for free art expression at the Davin Public School in the city of Regina.

Then the *Star-Phoenix* of Saskatoon writes of an exhibition of teen age paintings sponsored by Wynona Mulcaster of the Saskatoon Normal School. It opened at the Saskatoon Art Centre in August and was then offered to school superintendents in the province. It was immediately booked for months ahead, especially for teachers'

The Big Fire. Painting by Alan Murray, age 7, Regina.

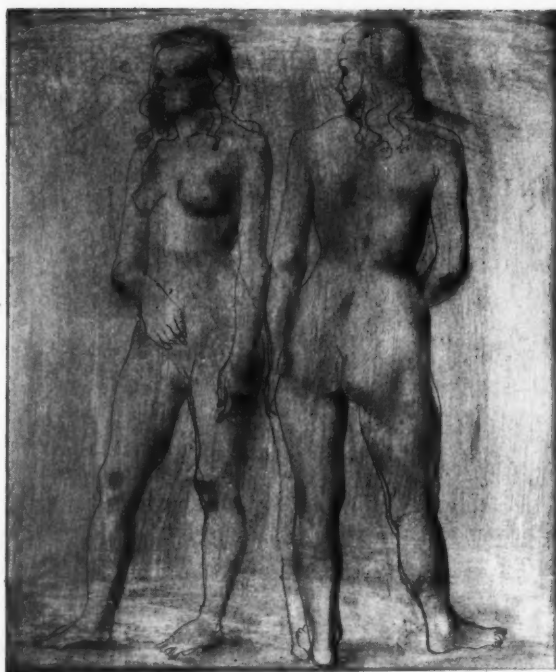


BARBARA HEPWORTH

Two Standing Nudes

Drawing. Pencil

From the "Exhibition of Contemporary British Drawings" organized for Canada by the British Council at the request of the National Gallery and now on tour of the Dominion. It will be seen in London, Ontario, in January, in Edmonton in March



conventions, where it is being used for discussion and study of new approaches in creative education.

The Economics of Design

Following the imposing of exchange restrictions brought on by the shortage of American dollars, Canadian manufacturers have found that, among the many resulting adjustments that they have had to make, the re-designing of household products looms large.

When imported American fittings were being used, then the simplest solution was usually to adopt some variation of a standard American design. Now, however, this dependence on American designs and designers has become, from a strictly economic point of view, less and less desirable.

A few individual manufacturers have accordingly begun to discuss, with universities and with research officials, the problem of finding trained talent for this purpose in Canada. Because of the urgent need to conserve American dollars, the Dominion Government, too, has become interested, since foreign exchange statistics show that relatively substantial sums are being and have been spent by Canadian manufacturers in obtaining product designs from United States sources.

Several meetings to discuss these problems were held during the past year in Ottawa, and, as a result, a new and active National Industrial Design Committee has been established,—its purpose to exchange information and promote research and development in this important field. Sitting on it are manufacturers, representatives of universities and of government departments interested, and of the newly formed Association of Canadian Industrial Designers. For the first year, at least, it is being supported with the aid of a small grant from the Dominion Government. The chairman is Donald B. Cruikshank of The Steel Equipment Company Ltd., Ottawa and Pembroke, and the Secretary is Donald W. Buchanan, Ottawa.

West Meets East

From the Maritime Provinces, comes word that an exhibition representative of the best work of Maritime artists has been selected and will be sent on tour of Western Canada. This continues the exchange of exhibitions which was initiated last year by R. W. Hedley of the Edmonton Museum of Fine Arts.

Sponsored by the Maritime Art Association, this exhibition was open to all artists of the region. Arrangements were in charge of Lawren

Harris, Jr., of Mount Allison University, and a panel of three judges selected the twenty-eight works chosen for showing this season on the Western Art Circuit.

New Federation Officers in Quebec

This year the Federation of Canadian Artists, Quebec Region, intends to place more accent on the problems of the artist and the decision was reflected in the new executive, elected at the annual meeting: Chairman, Harry Mayerovitch; vice-chairman, Louis Muhlstock; secretary, Ethel McNaughton; corresponding secretary, William Taylor; treasurer, Louise Barette; representative on National Executive, Alison Palmer; representative for *Canadian Art* affairs, Mary Fergie; representative on Community Councils Committee, Elsie Wright; director of publicity, Alfred Pinski; chairmen of committees: exhibitions,

Mary Filer; house, Robert Kinnis; membership, Robert Mosse; programme, Rhoda Newman.

Saskatchewan Arts Congress

In our last issue, we noted that Manitoba was the first province to form a provincial arts council. Saskatchewan has now quickly followed the lead of its sister province.

In October, representatives of musicians, artists, architects, authors, also of drama and handicraft groups, met in Regina to establish a body known as the Saskatchewan Arts Congress. Broadly speaking, this congress, which has a central council of 18 members, will act as an advisory body to the Saskatchewan Arts Board, a government sponsored agency which was set up in 1947 to promote and provide new services in the arts and to give assistance to existing cultural agencies in the province.

NEW BOOKS ON THE ARTS

MECHANIZATION TAKES COMMAND, A Contribution to Anonymous History. By Siegfried Giedion. 743 pp. + 501 plates. Toronto: The Oxford University Press, 1948. \$10.50.

When a work of solid and uncompromising scholarship wins wide acclaim outside the circle of specialized periodicals, even to the extent of special notice in mass circulation magazines such as *Time* and *Life*, we are justified in assuming that it may carry a particular significance for our generation. In this case we will not be wrong, but it is perhaps worth while warning readers of *Canadian Art* that its significance does not lie entirely within the field of technics; *Mechanization Takes Command* is not merely another history of mechanical invention. It deals also with the attitudes that have consciously—or often sub-consciously—shaped the objects invented and so it is bound to be a fertile treatise for those of us concerned with the creative arts.

After remarking, in his introductory chapter, that "an age which has lost its consciousness of the things that shape its life will know neither where it stands nor, even less, at what it aims" Giedion defines his intention: "to inquire how our contemporary life, with its mixture of constituent and chaotic elements, came about." This is indeed a herculean task even though an important start was made fourteen years ago by Lewis Mumford with his *Technics and Civilization*. Giedion works within a narrower compass—his main emphasis is on the nineteenth century—but he has got closer to the basic source material and has thrown a great deal more light on the specifically aesthetic consequences of mechanization. Human values are the yardstick throughout.

The book is sub-titled "Anonymous History" because it deals with "humble things, things not usually granted earnest consideration, or at least not valued for their historical import . . . which have shaken our mode of living to its very roots." And what a fascinating wealth of material he has turned up! Not only is this a long and weighty book (in every sense of the word!)—the 501 illustrations alone almost justifying the price—but his "typological" approach (tracing the development of types rather than styles) in relation, for instance, to posture, enables him to define the particular "bent" or "orientation" of each period from Egyptian chair styles of the Second Millennium B.C. to the Perriand-Breuer-Aalto-Eames responses of today. And, very typical of Giedion's sensitive nose for aesthetic cross-fertilization, we find embedded in this story, as in most other sections of the book, such a delicious little sub-theme as "The Hammock and Alexander Calder." Similarly, an important element of Giedion's main thesis is introduced in the little essay whose title gives a sudden insight into his whole approach: "Napoleon and the Devaluation of Symbols."

Arnold Toynbee has begun to accustom us to gauge historical developments in terms of "challenge" and "response". Most of us are only too unhappily aware that our society's response to the challenge of mechanization has, in many fields and for long periods, been a failure if we insist that human values be taken as a measure. Sometimes mechanization was applied wrongly or to inappropriate processes, resulting in a devaluation of standards and consequent prostitution of public taste. But for the most part our faulty responses have been manifested in what Giedion terms "a split between *thought* and *feeling*"

—a hall-mark of the nineteenth century which has persisted into our own century, nowhere more stubbornly than in Canada. Giedion first traced this split in his *Time, Space and Architecture* (Harvard, 1941) and it is perhaps in architecture that the consequences are often most dramatically—and sometimes hilariously—apparent. In a nutshell, *thought* is represented by sound and imaginative engineering (say steel or re-inforced concrete, radiant heating, etc.) which Giedion calls “constituent” elements, meaning that they are valid and potentially fertile additions to our technology. But our attitude towards *feeling* (or expression) has often cloaked and prostituted them with discordant or *chaotic* elements such as stylistic fancy dress. Exactly the same conflict is revealed when, say, a radio cabinet is dressed either in Gothic frippery or streamlined convolutions.

Ottawa 1948—Persistence of the split between thought and feeling.

Though now badly dilapidated, this row of clapboard houses represents a constituent element of mid-nineteenth century architecture (straightforward, dignified use of milled scantlings). During the recent renovation of two of them, doubtless with the laudable thought of making them more weather-proof, a decidedly chaotic effect has been created by a coating of fake masonry, made of a special inch-thick plaster in high relief. We have got to the point where even counterfeit masonry engenders a feeling of dignity and affluence.



Giedion's strictures on the streamlining craze are milder than they might be, but he should have noted that soft, ovoid forms enclosing machinery sometimes have practical justification in easy cleaning. The typical automatic toaster, shaped like a truncated sugar-loaf, is a good example of this—as it is also of mechanization immaculate and triumphant. For this reviewer's money, there couldn't be a happier marriage of thought and feeling than a good-looking mechanical device that promotes serenity at breakfast-time by preventing one from burning several slices of bread before getting something fit to sink one's teeth into.

And why, oh! why, this present-day craze for toasting? Giedion has not asked the question, but he has supplied the answer in his long and fascinating analysis of the mechanization of bread-making, which is one of his clearest examples of a faulty response. The mass-production machinery gradually introduced

during the nineteenth century permitted, and indeed encouraged, uniformity of product. And as so often happens when large-scale commodity production lacks any form of social control, standards are gradually debased to cater to the lowest common denominator of public taste. The soft, fluffy, anaemic stuff we now call bread is a very poor return—nutritionists would say—for the time, money and very high degree of technical ingenuity that has been lavished for the last hundred years on bread production processes. No wonder that we instinctively resort to toasting—if only for our teeth's sake. And it is with decidedly mixed feelings that, as Canadians, we read in Giedion that the first successful automatic bread-oven of the type now used everywhere was built in Westmount, Quebec, of all places!

In many fields today the gap between thought and

feeling is being slowly closed. This is the real meaning of the new architecture, as it is the conscious intention of the movement for improving industrial design which is at last being given government encouragement via the National Gallery. But we are also seeing the beginnings of an integration of all the arts and it is within this wider sphere—and not merely as the Bible of the industrial designers—that *Mechanization Takes Command* may sometime be regarded as one of the great germinal influences of our generation.

HAZEN SISE

REFUS GLOBAL. By Paul-Emile Borduas, Claude Gauvreau, Bruno Cormier, Françoise Sullivan, Fernand Leduc. 90 pp. + 8 plates. St. Hilaire Est, P.Q. Maurice Perron.

This strongly worded manifesto by Paul-Emile Borduas and his colleagues of the “*automatiste*”

group in Quebec will most likely provoke violent reactions from friends and foes alike. It has been issued in the form of a small portfolio, containing a number of mimeographed articles on painting, drama, poetry and the dance, also a few illustrations printed on coated paper. The main contribution, however, is a long critical essay by Borduas himself, which tends to be an expression, in terms of both art and society, of the doctrine of philosophical anarchism.

His assumption, like that of the anarchists, is that human personality is essentially good and is only corrupted by the deforming power of institutions and authority. Going at length into the history of both the clerical orders and political parties in Quebec, he claims that, in recent generations, the leaders of his race have, for the most part, imposed upon his compatriots a deliberate cultural isolation from the rest of the world. Hence the title of the portfolio, *Refus global*.

According to his definition, "automatisme" is an attempt by a group of Quebec artists to throw off the strait-jacket of these restrictions in education and culture and to create for themselves something new by purely intuitive means. Given this freedom of expression, Borduas claims that the individual painter, no matter how chaotic his first attempts at instinctive composition may be, will yet have taken the first steps on the road to a more honest and more essentially human and universal art.

For Borduas and his colleagues to add that this is the only way out for all artists in Quebec is, of course, a challenging statement, which many who may otherwise agree with certain of his historical conclusions will hasten to deny. Yet that such thoughts should have been put thus directly on paper by a group of artists does prove what diverse stirrings, sometimes direct and clear, sometimes confused and inchoate, do exist in French Canada today.

Let us hope that such freedom of thought will not be crushed out too arbitrarily. Already one learns that, because of his daring expression of such sentiments, Borduas since publishing this essay, has been dismissed from his teaching post in Montreal.

DONALD W. BUCHANAN

THE VARSITY STORY. By Morley Callaghan, illustrated by Eric Aldwinckle. (Printed at the University of Toronto Press). 172 pp. + 13 plates. Toronto: Macmillan Co. of Canada Ltd., \$2.50.

Even were I a competent literary critic, which I am not, I should not attempt to pass judgment upon Canada's most distinguished author. My remarks are purely directed at the production of this volume.

The function and very character of the typographer is so little understood in this country that a publisher is perhaps to be excused for employing the services of an artist in this capacity. It is to be hoped, however, that when our approach to book production ceases to be that of the amateur, we shall revert to more sane practice.



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In place of "Printers", we have type-setters, pressmen, binders, etc., none of whom knows a jot about the other's particular skill. It is the function, then, of the typographer to correlate the work of these artisans and to oversee the whole production of the book since no one else is competent to do this. To encompass this end he must have a first-rate knowledge of all the aspects of what is popularly termed, "printing". His character is that of a modest, self-effacing, shy and retiring man. He does not indulge in trickery nor does he ever call attention to his own virtuosity at his author's expense. In a word, he is not a "fancy boy" whose job it is to put a veneer of Art over the pages of a book. Since, as we have already said, the function and character of the typographer is completely misunderstood, Mr. Aldwinckle is not to be blamed for the appearance of this book since he is an artist and was, no doubt, pressed into service. However, we shudder to think of what it would have looked like had it not been on a subject which demanded some adherence to the dignity which one associates with a great university. He has employed various tricks: knaveries for which he probably expects to make his name; for example, margins which by their singularity scream for attention.

We give full credit to the University Press for one of the best pieces of printing of the year—within the limits imposed by the designer. The pages back properly, the alignment is excellent, but it is unfortunate that all this should be marred by a rather shoddy binding.

It is true that in this country we are severely limited in our choice of materials. The "Type Corporations" are so happy sitting on their "good lines", and the papermakers are so busy making newsprint that we are often reduced to desperation. This is a situation which, however iniquitous, should make the designer more acute. Here type used in the book is one of those fashionable abortions with scarcely a redeeming feature, except that last year it was employed in more of the "Fifty Books"* (that noble institution for the perpetration of horrors) than any other face. Similarly there are papers even here which would have proven more adaptable to Mr. Aldwinckle's competent illustrations. We have seen some of the originals and can only say that it is a great pity that he was unaware that a soft pulpy paper would destroy the quality of his line.

PAUL ARTHUR

*An annual exhibition organized by the American Institute of Graphic Arts.

GRAPHIS. Issued every two to three months. Zurich: Amstutz & Herdeg, Graphis Press, (Canadian distributors, Imperial Bank of Canada, Toronto 1. Six numbers \$14.00; single number \$3.00.

This beautifully produced magazine will prove a stimulating source of information for anyone associated with the graphic and applied arts, as well as the general reader interested in art and culture.

The twelve to eighteen articles in each issue are

international in scope, covering the most advanced work being produced by leading designers in all parts of the world and dealing with outstanding achievements of the past. Its written matter is brief, factual and copiously supported by illustrations carefully selected and admirably reproduced.

Perhaps the most notable feature of the magazine is the wide variety of subject matter covered in any one issue. The nineteenth number alone includes an article illustrated by seven of Picasso's recent lithographs, another on the poster designs of Joseph Binder, some beautifully reproduced pages from a French fifteenth century illuminated manuscript and articles on display techniques as applied to the recent British Industries Fair and the Tea Centre in London. Articles on the paper sculpture of Tadeusz Lipsky, illustrations and animated film scenes by Czech Jiri Trnka, French magazine covers, contemporary Italian engraving, Danish poster designs, and match-box cover designs from all parts of the world, give some indication of the international character of the magazine.

JOHN A. HALL

PICASSO, His Inner Life. By Paul Eluard. 168 pp. + 98 plates. New York: Philosophical Library, \$4.75.

"Painters have been victims of their medium", says Eluard, implying that Picasso is an exception. So much so is he an exception that, when we regard no matter what group of his works, his contempt for pens, brushes, canvas, is obvious. Never do we see that pleasure in paint itself that is the common quality of true painters since the time of the guild of St. Luke. Picasso is outside that brotherhood, for his art is one of ideas, imposed on the medium, as it were, by force. He bends it to his will—with astonishing results. And he is the darling of the *littérateurs*, for with him it is the idea and only the idea that counts. "When I have no blue I use red", says Eluard, quoting Picasso. Just so might a writer say "When I have no pen, I use a pencil."

Picasso as the "idea man" of art, with his restless, ceaseless energy and ingenuity will always attract, impress and mystify us. So has he fascinated Eluard and, reading this book, we, too, feel the spell again. That intense and imperious gaze shows even in the snapshot taken at the age of six. We see it in each of the other photographs, all hitherto unknown. The bewildering variety of his style is well represented in the ninety or so reproductions of which only a handful are familiar. One of the most beautiful is a line drawing of a naked man on a horse spearing a bull. They run the gamut from the great *Guernica* to little doodles of lines and dots; there is even a *Torn Paper*, 1943. These scraps and scribbles arouse our curiosity. What busy little man follows him round picking up these droppings, titling, cataloguing, and photographing them? Whoever he is, the public is willing to pay for his industry and the artist is well aware of their value for the slightest scrawls are carefully signed and dated.

Eluard's text (rhetorical-lyrical-philosophical, Polonius would have dubbed it) is intended as a tribute to his friend and an interpretation of his moods, a verbal embellishment to the reproductions. Part prose and part poetry it must be presumed to have suffered a good deal in translation and it is a pity that the French original was not given as well. Nevertheless the tone and feeling of the words (one cannot say "meaning" in the ordinary sense, for they are surrealist poems) do tell us something of the intellectual climate breathed by Picasso and his circle, do throw a further light on that mysterious and misty country of Bohemia, a province of the city of Paris, which is no longer part of our world though it does, apparently, continue to exist.

PHILIP SURREY

CONTRIBUTORS

Northrop Frye is assistant professor of English at Victoria College, University of Toronto, and the author of *Fearful Symmetry, A Study of William Blake*.

Charles H. Scott, who is principal of the Vancouver School of Art, is now acting, in the absence of Doris Shadbolt abroad, as our British Columbia representative.

Watson Balharrie, besides being a practising architect in Ottawa and one of the organizers of the Association of Canadian Industrial Designers, also teaches at the School of Architecture, McGill University, Montreal.

Robert Tyler Davis, who was formerly curator of the Portland Art Museum, is now Director of the Art Association of Montreal and Professor of Fine Arts at McGill University.

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A Search for Lost Paintings

On the opposite page are reproduced nine paintings which were lost in Europe during the war and which are being sought by their owner, Max Stern, Ph.D., formerly of the Gallerie Stern, Dusseldorf, Rhineland, and now a Canadian citizen and proprietor of the Dominion Gallery, Montreal. With the help of the Canadian government, two paintings in his collection, a Salomon Ruisdael and a Dirk Hals, have been restored to him. The missing pictures were stored either with Josef Roggendorf, Cologne, or with an auction house in the same city. The most important are as follows, with sizes in centimetres (numbers in brackets refer to illustrations on opposite page): (4) *Last Judgment*, Jerome Bosch, oil on panel, 97 x 72; (2) *Flower Piece*, Jan Brueghel the Elder, oil on panel, 66 x 50; (5) *Portrait of a Woman*, Otto Dix, oil on panel 115 x 75; (7) *Rocky Landscape with Bridge*, Joos de Momper, oil on canvas, 75 x 55; (9) *Faith and Work*, Jan Toorop, tempera on paper, 103 x 94; (8) *Moses Taking off his Sandals*, God Appearing in a Cloud of Smoke, J. B. van Loo, oil on canvas, approximately 80 x 100; (1) *St. Antonius*, unknown, French, 15th Century, oil on panel, approximately 60 x 40; (3) *Landscape with Figures and Water Mill*, François Knibbergen, oil on panel, 33 x 40, (6) *Winter Landscape*, Willem van Bommel, oil on canvas; *Self Portrait*, E. von Gebhardt, oil on paper, mounted on board, 42 x 34 (not reproduced).

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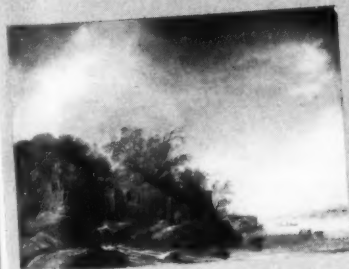
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LE MUSÉE DE LA PROVINCE DE QUÉBEC
Continued from page 72

Louis Archambault's ingeniously simplified sculptured head*, which won a first prize last year, they contribute new notes of controversy and excitement to a collection which already far transcends any strictly regional limitation in expression and content.

*Reproduced in Canadian Art, Vol. VI. No. 1, p. 27.

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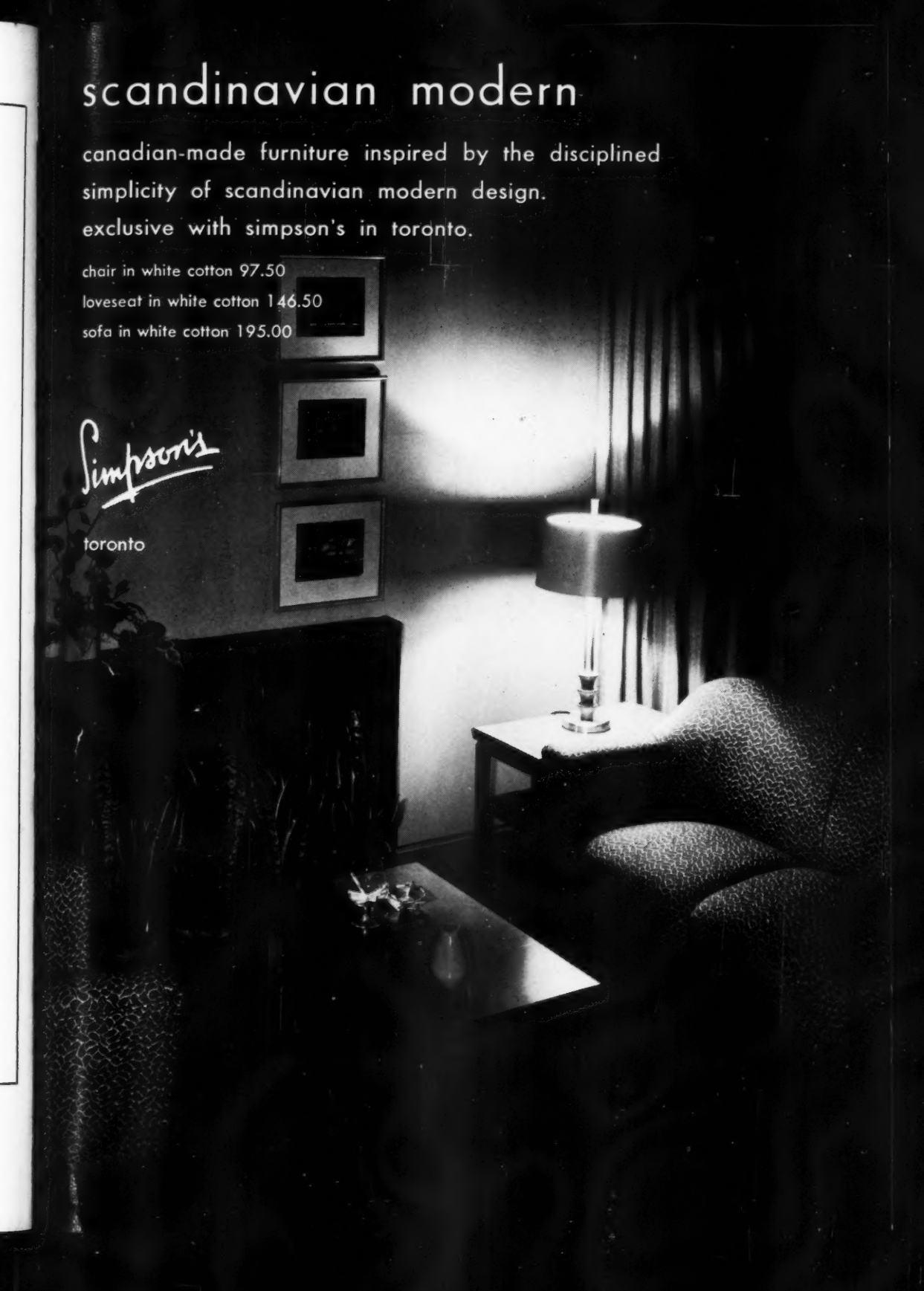
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